

# CHINA TOURISM

LEAVING  
FOOTPRINTS OF  
CHINA IN  
YOUR HEART

[www.hkctp.com.hk](http://www.hkctp.com.hk)

LOESS PLATEAU'S  
BLIND STORYTELLERS

HARBIN:  
A CENTURY OF  
RUSSIAN INFLUENCE

THE HUNTING  
GROUND OF  
GENGHIS KHAN



CLIMBING THROUGH THE  
DARKNESS OF RESISTANCE WAR

# MT. GAOLIGONG

## 291

ISSN 1025-577X



9 771025 577006

HK\$38 / S\$7.00

US\$6.95 / CAN\$8.95



# Come to China to Experience Our Successful Story of "Made in China"

You may be interested in knowing how a small firm has become  
the world's No.1 fan manufacturer in the past 30 years.  
You are welcome to visit our totally new fan manufacturing base  
occupied with 3 million square feet.

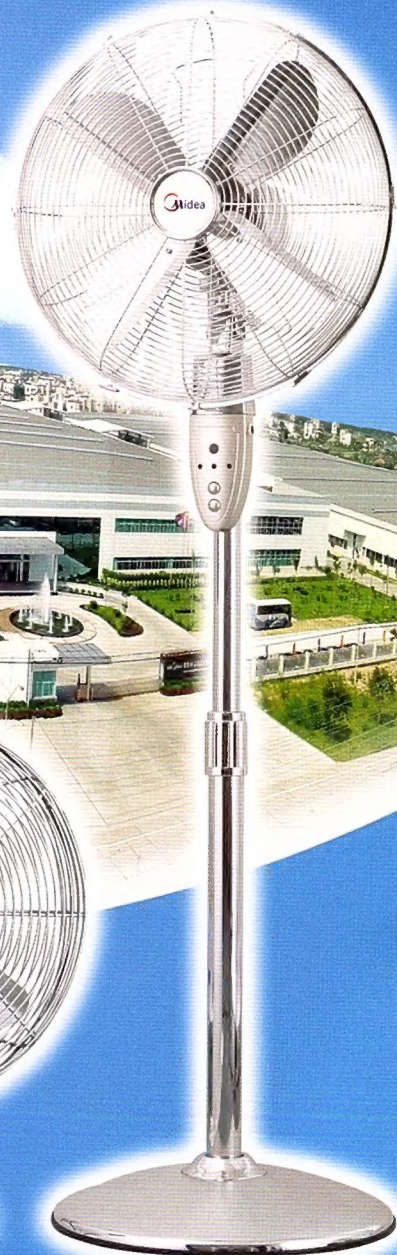
*MIDEA (ZHONGSHAN) ELECTRIC FAN MFG.CO., LTD.*

New Location: Midea Industry City, Dongfu Road,  
Dongfeng Town, Zhongshan,  
Guangdong, P.R.China

Tel: +86 760 2637952 Fax: +86 760 2637956

Post Code: 528425 Website: [www.midea.com.cn](http://www.midea.com.cn)

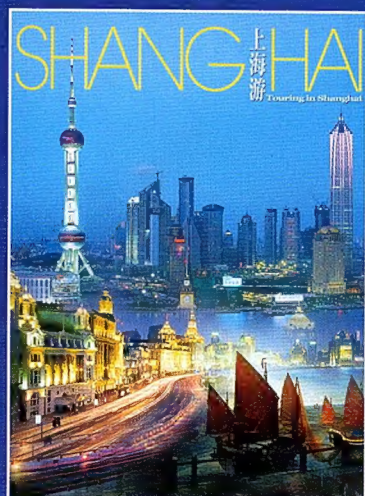
Email: [liubaoguo@midea.com.cn](mailto:liubaoguo@midea.com.cn)



ISO9001 ISO14001



**BEST SELLER**



## Shanghai

has evolved at an unprecedented speed for decades into the biggest commercial city in China and one of the great metropolises of the world. Favourably located at the mouth of the Yangtse River, Shanghai has a long history and a rich culture. Commercial tower blocks and traditional buildings exude their individual charms simultaneously in the Pudong District, where hundreds of buildings in different styles, old or new, are collectively known as the Exposition of World Architecture. A kaleidoscope of entertainments and festivals of Old Shanghai attracts scores of entrepreneurs and travellers alike. "Touring in Shanghai" takes you deeper into this vibrant city

through spectacular photography, along with outlines for more than 10 different kinds of tours including a shopping tour, popular tourist sights, cultural excursions, and more. Practical information summarises accommodations, transport and dining options, and tourist maps are also included. "Touring in Shanghai" is the latest, most comprehensive travel pictorial of Shanghai available in Hong Kong.



Now a **20%** off is offered to our readers

Original price HK\$120.00

Discounted price  
HK\$96.00

Copies: \_\_\_\_\_

### Postage (Surface mail per copy):

- ☐ Hong Kong HK \$15.00
- ☐ Macao, China, Taiwan HK \$22
- ☐ Asian countries (except Japan) HK \$36
- ☐ Non-Asian countries (including Japan) HK \$38

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Subscription # \_\_\_\_\_ if applicable

Daytime tel.: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment method:

☐ Cheque enclosed made payable to 'Hong Kong China Tourism Press'

☐ Credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER ☐ AE

Cardholder's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount (book + postage): \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your completed form either by fax to (852) 2561-8196 or mail to Subscription Department, 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.

For more information, please call us on tel. # (852) 2561-8001, Subscription Department.



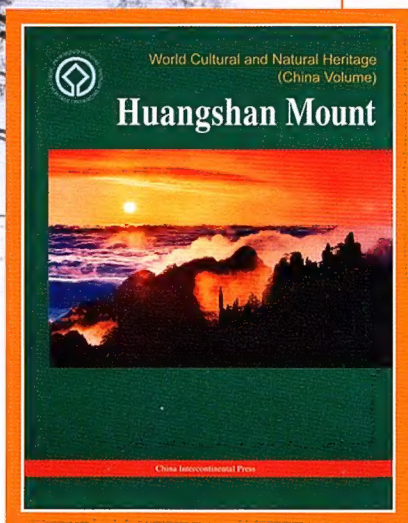
## Mt. Huangshan,

situated in the south of Anhui Province, is one of the most famous scenic areas in China. Being put into the World Heritage List, it is also granted with two laurels of cultural heritage and natural heritage by the UNESCO's World Heritage Commission.

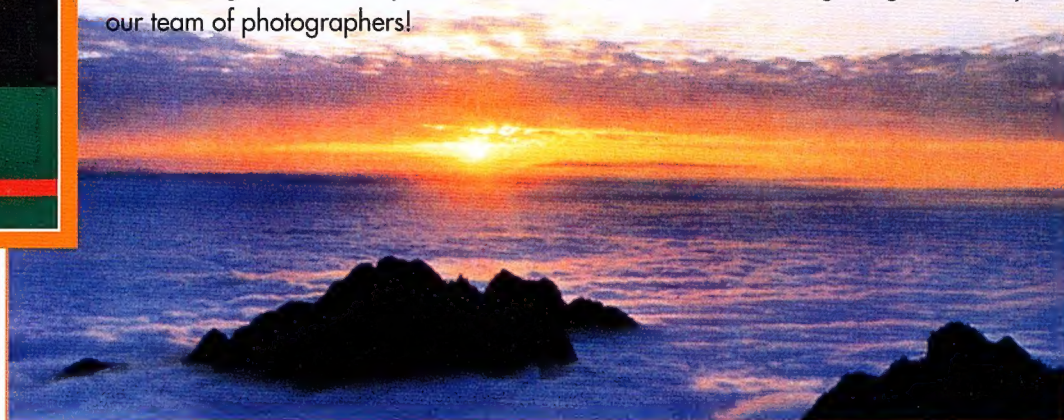
The landscape of the mountain is a typical granite hoodoo landform shaped during the long geological periods by several tectonic movements in the crust. Mt. Huangshan has long been famous for its strange-looking pine trees, grotesque rocks, sea of clouds and hot springs.

All over one thousand metres above sea level, there are 77 peaks in the scenic area of almost two hundred square kilometres. Granite rock forests and rock columns together with massive rocks scatter everywhere. Moreover, Mt. Huangshan is a diverse ecosystem with a treasure of wildlife. There are approximately 1450 species of plants, 300 species of vertebrates and 170 species of birds.

Combined unique scenery and magnificent sea of clouds, the beauty of Mt. Huangshan has continued to fascinate endless visitors. Catch a glimpse of its glory in this "Huangshan Mount" pictorial that is filled with breath-taking images taken by our team of photographers!



Listed price  
**HK \$70 / US \$9**



### Order form

Subscriber name: Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ Tel./E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Overseas order

	PRC	Other countries
Book + surface registered postage	HK \$105 / US \$13.5	HK \$121 / US \$15.5

### Method of Payment

☐ Cheque Payable to Hong Kong China Tourism Press

Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER ☐ AE

Name of Cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_ Card no. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:

Circulation dept. 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20, Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong or fax to (852) 2561-8196.





**China**  
CHINA TOURISM



## 7 From the Editor

## 9 Calendar

## 10 Update

## 12 Travel Notes

## 14 Feature Story

### Climbing through the Darkness of the Resistance War at Mt. Gaoligong

*Photos by Yang Yankang Article by Zhang Dongpan, Sun Min and Li Zheng*

In May of 1944, hundreds of thousands of the soldiers from the Chinese expeditionary army climbed over the imposing Gaoligong Mountains and drove the invading Japanese troops out of China. This was the first victory of the counterattack in Chinese modern history, and it marked a historical moment.

## 40 On the Way

### Chishui — The Land of a Thousand Waterfalls

*Photos by Chan Yat Nin Article by Chan Yat Nin & Ling Qihui*

With more than 4,000 waterfalls scattered all over the city, Chishui is now a unique tourist attraction renowned for its natural ecological features.

## 48 Discoveries

### Blind Storytellers of the Loess Plateau

*Photos & Article by Huang Xinli*

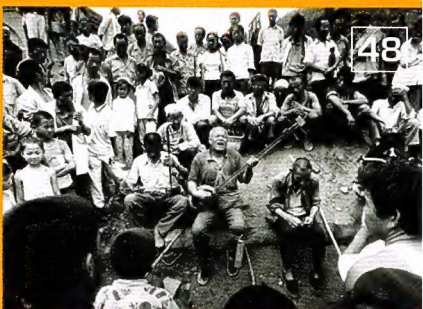
Although the traditional genre of storytelling is in decline, the storytellers from the loess plateau of the northern Shaanxi Province keep on performing from one village to another, year in year out, in spite of old age and blindness.

## 56 Traveller's Corner

### Horseback Riding in the Yunnan-Sichuan Highland

*Photos by Liang Bingquan Article by Little Leaf*

Two years ago, I had a great trip to Lijiang and Shangri-La in Yunnan Province. Then I paid another visit to Yunnan, heading for the north from Shangri-La, crossing the Jinsha River to reach Derong, Xiangcheng and Daocheng in Sichuan Province.



**contents**



# China

## CHINA TOURISM

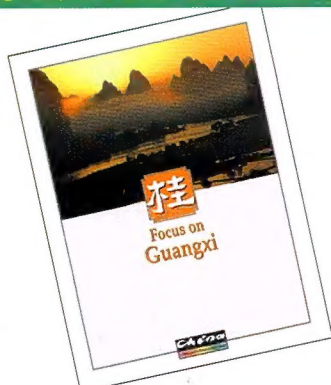
English Edition

SAVE OFF THE NEWSSTAND PRICE

**1** year subscription (12 issues)

**HK \$296**

**Gift: Focus on Guangxi**



**2** years subscription (24 issues)

**HK \$540**

**Gift: China's 23 World Heritage Sites**



### Overseas Subscription Rates

Region	Surface Mail		Air Mail	
	1 year	2 years	1 year	2 years
PRC, Macao and Taiwan	HK\$451/US\$58	HK\$850/US\$109	HK\$690/US\$89	HK\$1328/US\$171
Asian countries (except Japan)	US\$69	US\$130	US\$89	US\$171
Japan and non-Asian countries	US\$70	US\$133	US\$102	US\$197

☐ Additional charge for Registered Mail HK\$156/US\$20 per year.

☐ Additional charge for US cheque US \$7

I would like to subscribe to CHINA TOURISM starting from \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_ (Month)

☐ 1 year, please send me Focus on Guangxi

☐ 2 year, please send me China's 23 World Heritage Sites

### Subscriber's Information

Surname: (Mr/Mrs/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax/E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Method of Payment

Total payment: HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ /US\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Cheque enclosed made payable to "HONG KONG CHINA TOURISM PRESS"

☐ Please debit my credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER ☐ AE

Card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to : HONG KONG CHINA TOURISM PRESS (Circulation Department), 24/F Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.  
Tel: (852) 2561 8001 Fax: (852) 2561 8196



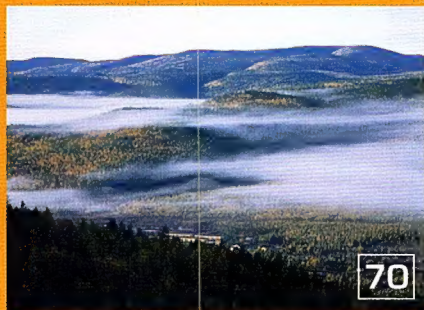


## 64 City Snap

### Harbin — Infused with a Century of Russian Influence

Photos & Article by Yuan Zhizhu

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, as well as the construction of the China Eastern Railway, turned the original small fishing village of Harbin into a metropolis infused with a century of Russian influence.



## 70 Nature

### Mordaga: A Hunting Ground of Genghis Khan

Photos & Article by Liu Zhaoming, Huang Yanhong

Travelling northwards along the rolling Greater Hinggan Mountains, we finally arrived at the top of the "cockscorn" of China — Mordaga of Inner Mongolia, the largest forest park in the country.

## 74 Excursions

### A Stroll in Xiguan

Photos & Article by Zhu Ping



100-year-old granny with bound feet  
(by Yang Yankong)



## 78 Excursions

### Macau Grand Prix — The Return of a Spectacular Event

Photos & Article by Macau Government Tourism Office

The Grand Prix is the annual grand occasion of Macau. This year, the MSAR Government will hold a special three-week party "Motorsport Festival — Grand Prix Carnival" for the motorsport fans.

## 80 Traveller's Corner

### Searching for the Lost City of Ancient Qiemo

Photos & Article by Dr. Christoph Baumer

This story is about the 2000-year-old city that has been slumbering in the Taklimakan Desert and the Chinese-Swiss expedition who tried to discover it.

## 85 Next Issue

## 86 Feature Destination







Consultants (In alphabetical order)	Ian Fok Chun Wan, Lam Chun, Ma Chi Man, Ma Lin, Wong Tak Hoi, James T. Wu, Howard Young
Director	Tchan Fou-li
Vice Director & Editor-in-Chief	Wang Miao
Deputy General Managers	Kathy Wong, James Jiang, Connie Lee
Executive Editor-in-Chief	Ma Yiu Chun
Deputy Editors-in-Chief	Tu Nai Hsien, Chan Yat Nin
Director of Editorial Department	Dianna Lau
Deputy Directors of Editorial Department	Xie Guanghui, Huang Yanhong
English Editors	Zuo Jun, Maggie Lam
Director of Art Department	Norris Tong
Designers	Y. Y. Lau, W. Y. Yuen, M. Y. Li, S. Y. Leung
Assistant Designer	Lily Lam
Advertising Manager	Yu Xifan
China Account Managers	Tung Wai Ning, Shi Tiantong
Manager of Sales & Marketing Department	Connie Lee (concurrent)
Business Development Manager	James Jiang (concurrent)
Director of Accounts & Administration Dept.	Kathy Wong (concurrent)

Publisher: HK CHINA TOURISM PRESS

24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2561 8001 Fax: (852) 2561 8057/ 2561 8196

Editorial Dept., Business Dept., Advertising Dept., Sales Dept. Tel: (852) 2561 8001

China Tourism Photo Library Tel: (852) 2561 8001

E-mail: English Editorial Dept: edit-e@hkctp.com.hk

Advertising Dept: ad@hkctp.com.hk

Sales & Marketing Dept: mktg@hkctp.com.hk

Photo Library: plib@hkctp.com.hk

Hong Kong China Tourism Ltd. (Licence No. 351850) Tel: (852) 2516 9228

Printer: C & C Offset Printing Co. Ltd.

C & C Building, 36 Ting Lai Road, Tai Po, N.T. Tel: (852) 2666 4988

Agencies: Australia Gordon and Gotch Ltd., • Belgium Sun Wah Supermarket • Brazil Comercio Impotdora Konmin Ltd. • Canada and US Supreme Books Company (852) 2696 3364; LMPI (1) 514-355 5610 • China National Publications Import & Export Corp., Beijing • England Guanghwa Company Ltd., London • France Europasie S.A.R.L., Paris • Holland Ming Ya, Amsterdam • Hong Kong Foreign Press Distributors Ltd. • Japan Koyosha Co. Ltd., Tokyo • Macau Starlight Bookstore Ltd.; The World Book Company; Plaza Cultural Macau Ltd. • Malaysia Book & Publications Link Sdn Bhd. (586030K) • Singapore BPL(S)Pte Ltd (65) 6749 3651 • Thailand Chew Hong Service Ltd., Bangkok • The Philippines Good Quality Merchandising, Manila

China Tourism monthly magazine is available on the scheduled flights, and at VIP lounges, guest rooms and counters of the following organisations:


 CATHAY PACIFIC



 AIR MACAU  
澳門航空

 中華航空  
CHINA AIRLINES

 EVA AIR  
長榮航空

 復興航空  
TransAsia Airways

 UNITED  
AIRLINES

 中國國際航空公司  
AIR CHINA

China Advertising License: ICAD006

News-stand price: HK\$38/ S\$7.00/ US\$6.95/ CAN\$8.95

Printed in Hong Kong

Copyright reserved

No.291 Oct/Nov 2004

## FROM THE EDITOR

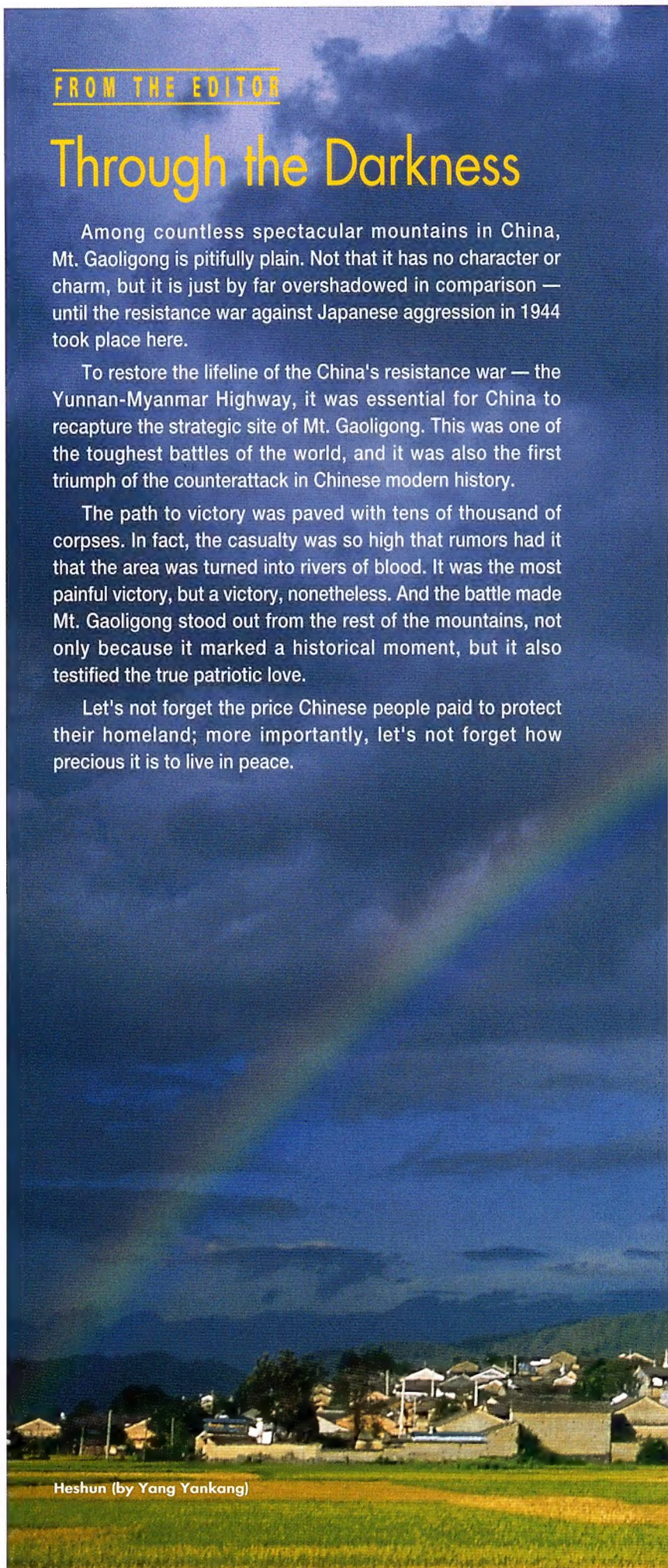
# Through the Darkness

Among countless spectacular mountains in China, Mt. Gaoligong is pitifully plain. Not that it has no character or charm, but it is just by far overshadowed in comparison — until the resistance war against Japanese aggression in 1944 took place here.

To restore the lifeline of the China's resistance war — the Yunnan-Myanmar Highway, it was essential for China to recapture the strategic site of Mt. Gaoligong. This was one of the toughest battles of the world, and it was also the first triumph of the counterattack in Chinese modern history.

The path to victory was paved with tens of thousand of corpses. In fact, the casualty was so high that rumors had it that the area was turned into rivers of blood. It was the most painful victory, but a victory, nonetheless. And the battle made Mt. Gaoligong stood out from the rest of the mountains, not only because it marked a historical moment, but it also testified the true patriotic love.

Let's not forget the price Chinese people paid to protect their homeland; more importantly, let's not forget how precious it is to live in peace.



Heshun (by Yang Yankang)









TOP SERVICE  
TO BUSINESS TRAVELLERS  
AND TOURISTS ALIKE

Services include:

- \* Worldwide hotel reservations
- \* International flight bookings
- \* Hotel packages
- \* Organised tours of China, Asia, the United States, Canada and Europe
- \* Cruises and holiday packages
- \* Car rental service
- \* Launch rental service
- \* Eurail pass
- \* Visa service

Service Hotline: **2516 9228** (Agnes Wat) Fax: **2563 7994** E-mail: **travel@hkctp.com.hk**



# ADVERTISEMENT ENQUIRIES

I am interested in advertising with **CHINA TOURISM** (Please complete in block letters):

Advertiser's Name

Product(s)

Issue No. / Page No.

Special Requests: ☐ Quotation ☐ Sample ☐ Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms): \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Type of Business (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

(tick one): ☐ Import ☐ Export ☐ Wholesale ☐ Retail ☐ Agent ☐ Manufacturing

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_



## OCT / NOV

Oct 16-Nov 6

Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province

**T**he sixth **West Lake Exposition** will showcase exhibitions of automobiles, furniture, jewellery, art and so on. Tourists can enjoy highlights of Yueju Opera, take a lake cruising by dragon boat amidst the deafening sound of gongs and drums, and enjoy the folk arts show. Apart from these are dazzling displays of fireworks on the gorgeous West Lake.



Oct 31-Nov 8

Guilin City, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

**G**uilin city enjoys the reputation of having the country's most beautiful scenery. During the **Guilin Landscape Tourism Festival**, Lijiang River Autumn Moon Lantern Festival will also be held. Tourists can join the evening tour of Lijiang River and appreciate the beautiful lanterns. The bonfire evening party will be held on Love Island, and there will be folk songs and dance performance.



Nov 5-14

Maoluo River, Nantou County, Taiwan

**T**he **Nantou International Kite Festival** will feature wonderful kite designs from various nations. Kite making classes will teach children how to use bamboo and traditional calligraphy paper to make their own kites. Another highlight of the festival will be the demonstrations of kite flying skills by Taiwanese experts and top kite fliers from around the world. To add more excitement to the event, the Nantou Search and Rescue Team will give a live demonstration of gliders flying.



open at Oct 29

Jinan City, Shandong Province

**T**he **French Contemporary Art Exhibition**, entitled "City Red Dressing," will be the largest and highest-level exhibition on contemporary art ever hosted in Jinan. As an important part of the French Culture Year in China, the exhibition will reciprocate to the activity called "Red Decoration of the Eiffel Tower" held in Paris earlier this year. Sixteen renowned French artists will each create a large outdoor installation. Their work will remain in Jinan after the exhibition is over. Many top-level contemporary artists including Laurent Gaudin, Philippe Durand, Ann Veronica Janssen will attend the exhibition.



Oct 8-31

Macau

**D**uring the **18th Macau International Music Festival**, over 20 performances will provide audiences a sense of romanticism. An impressive list of names including violinist Akiko Suwanai, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Hong Kong singer Frances Yip, jazz group Maria Joao and Mario Laginha amongst others, will be featured in this music fest. There will also be the opera of "Romeo and Juliet" and "Chicago". While some performances will be presented at landmark spots such as the Macau Cultural Centre and at the Macau Tower, open-air concerts will be held in front of four well-preserved churches.

till Jan 24, 2005

Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong

**O**ver the years, Chinese publishers have injected lots of distinctive design elements into book design. Co-presented by the Cultural Department of Hong Kong, Tsinghua University and Shantou University of China, the **Flip: Chinese Contemporary Book Design Exhibition** aims at reflect the current trend of contemporary book design in China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan by displaying over two hundreds selected works.



## Tibetan Fresco Repair in Full Swing

Experts from the Dunhuang Academy have repaired more than 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> of frescos at three Tibetan lamaseries, namely the Potala Palace, Sagya Lamasery and Norbuglinkha.

Dunhuang Academy was chosen by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage to complete the repair work at the lamaseries, as 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of frescos had begun to fade. With central government spending more than 300 million yuan for saving the time-honoured relics, the project has been proceeding as planned, carefully restoring the frescoes to their original style.

Dunhuang Academy takes the lead in Chinese fresco protection and has restored a total of 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> of mural paintings in Dunhuang grottoes.



## Rodin's Large Thinker Settled in Shanghai

A statue of the Large Thinker, a renowned sculpture by great French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), has settled down at the Shanghai Municipal Library.

This 1.8-m-tall statue, erecting on a two-metre-high white marble foundation, was cast from the fifth mould for the Large Thinker of Rodin's. Noted French collector Emmanel Javogue contributed the statue to the Shanghai Cultural Development Foundation recently.

It is learned that sculptor Rodin made five plaster moulds for the Large Thinker. A total of 25 sculptures of the Large Thinker have been created from the No. 5 mould.

## Redesigned Olympics Stadium to Save Billions

China could expect savings of up to 1.6 billion yuan (US \$336 million) with the redesign of the Beijing Olympics stadium for the 2008 Games. Work on the project was suspended in August amid a nationwide drive to cut down on "white elephant" projects to prevent the state economy from overheating.

The stadium's new design, which has been endorsed by experts, is expected to slash the construction bill from the original 3.89 billion yuan to 2.3 billion yuan. The original design of the stadium was to feature a latticework of girders which called for up to 136,000 tn of steel — four times the average for a conventional building, whereas, the new design needed only 32,000 tn, with only the spectator stand being covered.

## Mao Zedong Statue park Complete 1st-phase Construction

The extension project of the Mao Zedong Youth Statue Park in Shaoshan City of Hunan Province has completed its first-phase construction. Total investment into the park stands at 160 million yuan (~US \$20 million) and it will occupy 5.7 ha of land after the extension. Besides the statue of late leader Mao Zedong, the statues of his six relatives will be added to the sight in addition to a fountain, a stage and a sitting area for spectators. The whole project is expected to be completed before December 26, Chairman Mao's 111th birthday anniversary.



## A Better View of the Forbidden City

Two grand halls and an imperial garden in the Forbidden City are opened to the public recently to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Palace Museum.

Renovation of the Hall of Wuyingdian will be completed at the end of this year.

Visitors may feel their IQs strained when visiting the Hall of Wenhuadian, where ancient learned officials graded final imperial examinations.

Last but not least, Jianfugong garden is one of the many places where the feudal nobility relaxed and had fun.



## Giant Pandas to Have Larger Habitat

Baoxing County of Sichuan Province plans to spend 180 million yuan (US \$21.8 million) to build a giant panda protection and tourism zone.

With a designated area of 1,200 km<sup>2</sup>, the Giant Panda Ecological Tourism Zone will comprise the state-level Fengtongzhai giant panda nature reserve, a safari park, a station for panda observation and a state forest park.

The world's first giant panda was discovered in Baoxing in 1869. There are only approximately 1,590 pandas worldwide, mainly distributed in China's Sichuan and Shanxi provinces. Currently, more than 140 giant pandas live in the Fengtongzhai Nature Reserve, accounting for more than 10% of the national total.



## Restoring the Xixia Relics

A group of Chinese scientists will travel to Russia in October to begin a Sino-Russian project to repair cultural relics belonging to the Xixia Kingdom (1038-1227) of ancient China.

Five Chinese archaeologists would join their Russian counterparts to work out a detailed plan on the repair of 1,500 relics collected by the Institute of Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg.

Xixia Kingdom was established by some Qiang minority, in the eastern section of the ancient Silk Road. It overlaps with today's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and parts of Gansu, Shaanxi and Inner Mongolia. Statistics revealed that about 80% of the world's Xixia cultural relics are now stored in Russia; only 10% remain in China.

The programme is to be completed within three years and China will cover its budget of 10 million yuan (US \$1.2 million). According to their agreement, the Chinese scientists will have sole responsibility for the repair work and be granted full access to the Russian collection. As a reward for this, China will get a whole set of replicas free of charge.

## Shanghai to Build the Longest Bridge

The Chinese government has approved 12 billion-yuan (US \$1.5 billion) project to build a 19-km bridge and tunnel link in Shanghai. According to the plan, this Chongming bridge would more than double the size of the world's longest suspension bridge in Japan.

The route to Chongming Island would combine a 10-km suspension bridge with a nine-kilometre tunnel. The bridge would connect with the tunnel at another small island midway. When completed, the 25.5-km trip would take less than 30 minutes.

Chongming, known as a sanctuary for waterfowl, is being aggressively developed as a residential and leisure outpost for Shanghai's 20 million people. The island is at the mouth of the Yangtze River where it meets the sea.





## Historic Night Flights to Tibet

**Tianjin** Air China will open historic night flights between Lhasa, capital of Tibet, and Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province.

The Chengdu-Lhasa flight, opened 39 years ago, is the major one to Tibet, and about 85% passengers entering or leaving Tibet take it. The annual number of passengers by this flight stands at 800,000 and the prosperous tourism in Tibet have brought out soaring numbers of tourists and business travellers. But Gongga Airport in Lhasa, 4,000 m above sea level, used to have its capacity limited to daylight for safety reasons. Planes have to leave Lhasa for Chengdu two hours before sunset — even earlier if they leave Chengdu for plateau-based Lhasa.

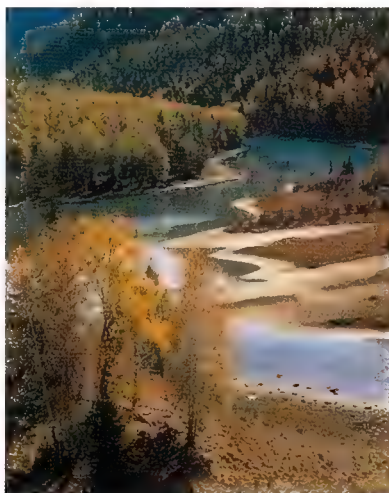
Air China are installing precise navigation systems on the aircraft used on night flights. When completed, Air China can add a number of flights that can safely fly in late afternoon and at night.



## Airlines Eyes Northwest and Central Asia

**Xinjiang** Hainan Airlines, China's fourth largest carrier, has set up a branch airline company in the capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The new branch aims at starting regional routes in the spacious autonomous region and also international flights to Central Asian countries. Being the country's first shareholding airline company, Hainan Airlines has already launched five new routes from Urumqi to other cities in Xinjiang.

The airline's expansion was a major step of the country's initiative in forming a bridge in the air among countries in East and Central Asia and those in Europe.



## Maiden Flights: Penghu to Macau

**Taiwan** The maiden international charter flight from Penghu of Taiwan to Macau took place on August 10 with a plane-load of passengers. This is the first for Penghu's Magong Airport, as well as a milestone for tourism opportunities to the archipelago. Depending on the number of foreign visitors to Penghu, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications may allow more direct charter flights to Penghu in the future.

## Cabs Charging More Soon

**Beijing** Beijing cabs may soon charge extra because of the gasoline price hike. Since the gasoline price went up twice this year, taxi drivers are spending some 500 yuan (US \$60) more a month. Meanwhile, in Jinan, the capital of Shangdong Province, cabs have been charging passengers an extra yuan to compensate for higher gas prices already.

## TVs to be Installed in Beijing taxis

**Beijing** Travellers won't feel bored any more when they take a cab in Beijing in the near future as TV sets will be installed in 3,000 taxis within this year. Next year, the number will even reach 10,000. Apart from taxis, passengers now can watch TV on 2,160 buses in Beijing and the number will reach 4,000 by the end of this year. Meanwhile, the subway Batong Line and Line 13 are also in the experiment of installing TV sets. It is estimated that the experiment will be accomplished in October.





## Shanghai to Stage First Bullfights

**Shanghai** Shanghai plans to stage bullfights in October, after a similar plan in Beijing ran foul of animal rights groups.

The Shanghai Sports Association would invest 20 million yuan (US \$2.4 million) to bring three matadors and six fighting bulls from Spain for the four-hour spectacle, a first for the Chinese mainland. The city hopes to pack the 80,000-seat Shanghai Stadium for the fights. Organisers have promised spectators the bullfighting will have an "original Spanish flavour".



## Flowers Contest in Beijing

**Beijing** Beijing's gardeners are busy breeding new varieties of flowers to ensure that the city is in full bloom when it hosts the 2008 Olympic Games. Just now, more than 600 varieties are being bred at a nursery near the Fragrant Hill, half an hour's drive west of Beijing.

About 5 million pots of flowers will be planted in gardens and along streets around the city over the next couple of years, to test whether they can adapt to the local climate, especially if they will bloom between July and September, when the 2008 Games are expected to be held. Some 40 genera of Olympic flower candidates, including *Malus spectabilis*, the Chinese rose and mint flowers, have already grown in a park in Xuanwu District and along some sections of the Third Ring Road.

## European Travel Giant Gullivers Enters China

**China** Gullivers Travel Associates (GTA), the largest independent supplier of global travel services, has confirmed launching its China subsidiary in Beijing recently. It has formed two companies and three representative offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Hong Kong.

Gullivers Travel Associated (China) Ltd. describes itself as a privately owned travel company for inbound and domestic travel services. It will utilise its US \$60 million investment in travel technology and extensive global network of sales offices to bring up-to-date information to its worldwide customer base about travel information in China.

GTA, which boasts US \$880 million in annual turnover, was the first European travel company licensed by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA). World Trade Organization (WTO) economic forecasts show that China will become the largest inbound destination and the fourth largest outbound tourist country by the year of 2020. The total tourism income will be more than 3.6 trillion yuan (US \$434 billion), 8-10% of China's estimated gross domestic product of that year.

## Renovated Terminal Opened for Flights

**Beijing** After a 14-month overhaul, the old terminal building at the Capital International Airport has opened to relieve some of the mounting air traffic pressure in Beijing.

China Southern, the country's largest air carrier, and the airport had invested 18 million yuan (US \$2.2 million) altogether to launch a company to run the refurbished Terminal One. Therefore, the renovated Terminal will be used exclusively by China Southern for domestic air routes.

With an annual capacity of 9 million passengers, the facility will help divert the congestion in the incumbent Terminal 2, which has already topped its designed annual capacity of 27.5 million. The airport is building a third terminal, with an investment hopefully exceeding 20 billion yuan (US \$2.4 billion).

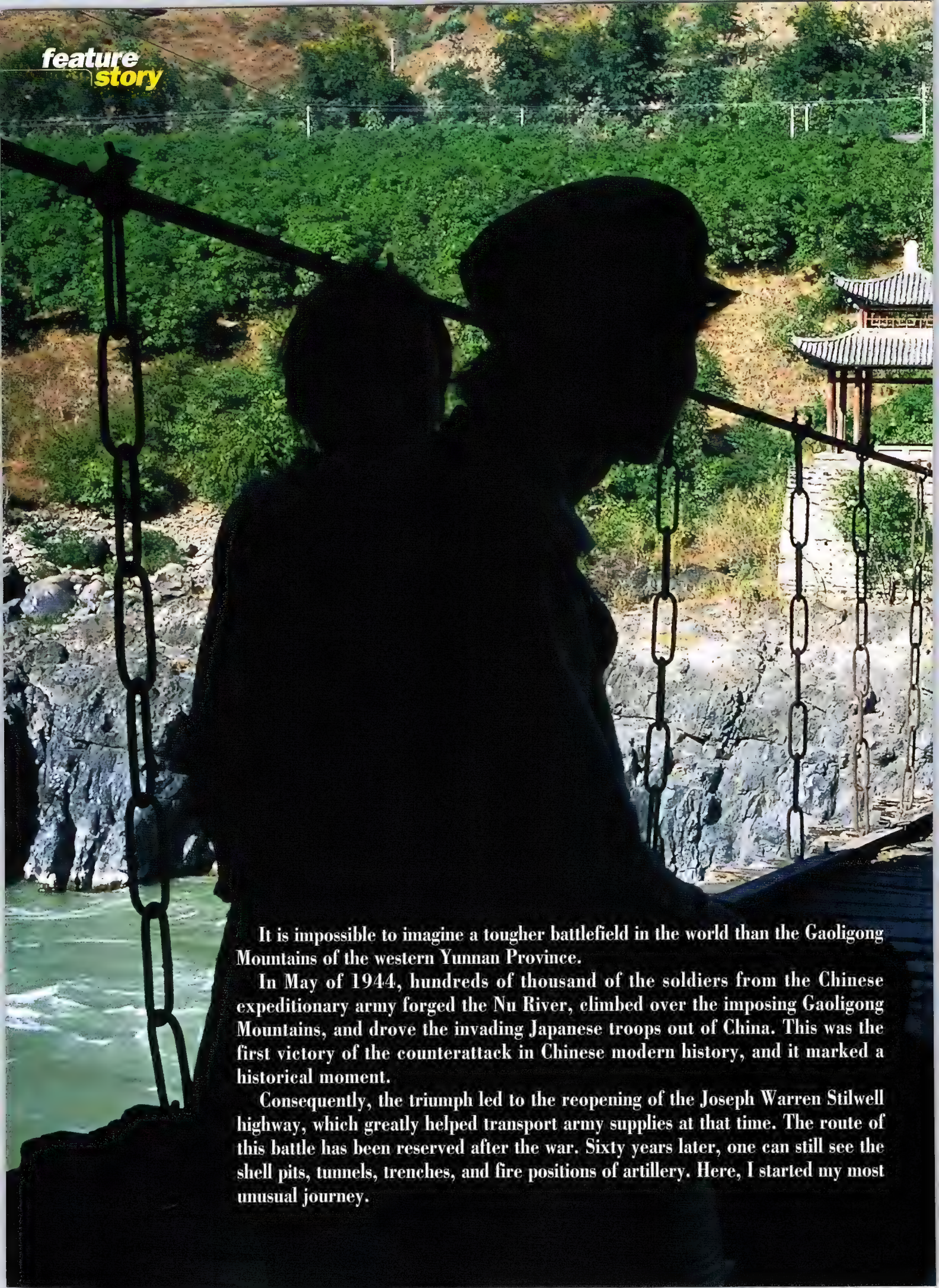
## UA linking Shanghai and Chicago

**Shanghai** The United Airlines is going to launch a direct flight from Shanghai to Chicago starting Oct. 31. The company announced the decision shortly after a new Sino-US aviation cooperation agreement was reached.

Nowadays travellers have to connect flight in one of the three cities of Tokyo, San Francisco and Los Angeles when going from China to the east coast in the United States. The new Shanghai-Chicago route will cut the whole journey by five hours and reduce flight fare by one third. According to the UA arrangement, Boeing 777 will be used to fly the daily route.





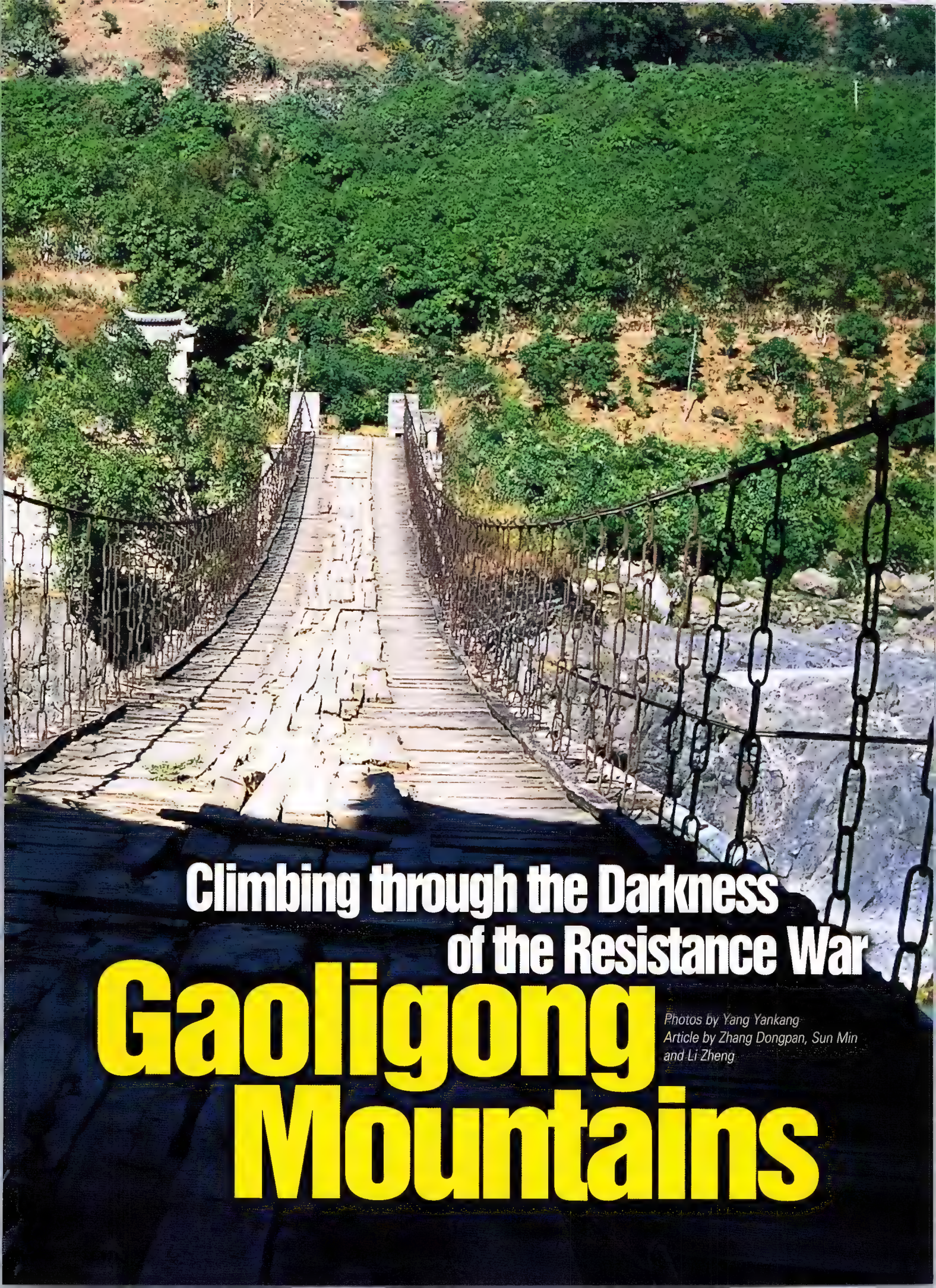


It is impossible to imagine a tougher battlefield in the world than the Gaoligong Mountains of the western Yunnan Province.

In May of 1944, hundreds of thousand of the soldiers from the Chinese expeditionary army forged the Nu River, climbed over the imposing Gaoligong Mountains, and drove the invading Japanese troops out of China. This was the first victory of the counterattack in Chinese modern history, and it marked a historical moment.

Consequently, the triumph led to the reopening of the Joseph Warren Stilwell highway, which greatly helped transport army supplies at that time. The route of this battle has been reserved after the war. Sixty years later, one can still see the shell pits, tunnels, trenches, and fire positions of artillery. Here, I started my most unusual journey.





**Climbing through the Darkness  
of the Resistance War**

# **Gaoligong Mountains**

*Photos by Yang Yankang  
Article by Zhang Dongpan, Sun Min  
and Li Zheng*





**L**ast winter we walked the same route trekked by the expeditionary army to recapture western Yunnan. Even in the deep mountains, we could still see traces of scars left by the war. Though the smoke of gunpowder was dispersed long ago, history is written here forever.

The two routes to the Gaoligong Mountains are both from the east to west, one known as Nanqigongfang and another Beiqigongfang. They were ancient merchant routes leading to Tengchong, a border town. We started our trip on the Nanqigongfang route and came back on the Beiqigongfang.

Walking north along the Nu River, we were welcomed by a special oppressive air mixed with the smell of the tropical plants. The temperature was 30°C and the water in the river was crystal blue, reflecting the snow on the Gaoligong Mountains.

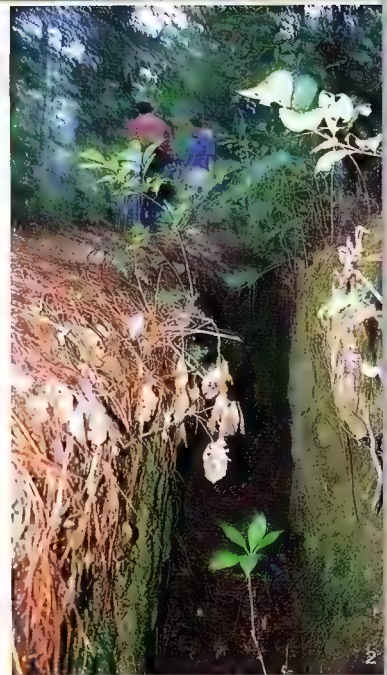
### Life-and-Death War for China

The Shuanghong Bridge looked so peaceful in the last rays of the setting sun. The mountain along the east bank of the river is part of the Nushan Mountain ranges, where the Chinese and Japanese armies were once locked in mortal combat more than 60 years ago.

### The Smallest Museum

Setting off from the riverside we reached Baihualing, where we stayed with Wu Chaoming, an old farmer. Not only does he work hard on his farm, but he also studies the history of the area. His private history museum might be the smallest in the world, because his whole collection could fit into the type of cartridge box used by the US army during the Second World War.

The museum, on the second floor of his livestock shed, is too low to stand up in. One wall is adorned with paintings of the war, showing mountains enveloped in smoke, as well as bombs and supplies dropping from planes. Many people from different





## The War against Japanese Invaders in Western Yunnan

In 1942, Japanese troops took over Myanmar (Burma), then marched north along the Yunnan-Myanmar Highway and occupied China's territory west of Nu River. After the Yunnan-Myanmar Highway — the lifeline for China's resistance war — was cut off, China and the United States opened an air corridor from India to China (the famous Hump Airline).

Owing to great losses and limited capacity of the Hump Airline, it was decided to recapture the north of Myanmar and break the blockade in March 1943. A highway from Liduo (north-eastern India) to Wanting (a small town in the border area of Yunnan Province) was built, connecting with the Yunnan-Myanmar Highway, which linked with the international transportation lines.

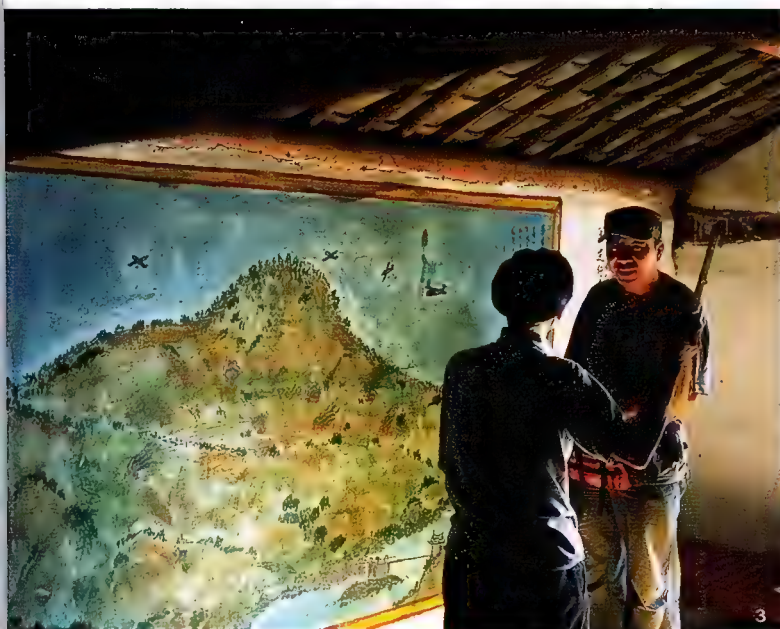
China expeditionary army was rebuilt to coordinate the counterattack, and the two armies crossed the Nu River from the north and south separately. The 20th group army was responsible for

attacking Tengchong in the north and the 11th group army would hit Longling in the south.

On the night of May 11, the 20th group army forged the Nu River and started the counterattack. The 53rd and 54th corps of the 20th group army crossed over the Japanese controlled Gaoligong Mountains and went straight to Tengchong, recapturing it on September 14.

On May 20, the 11th group army forged the Nu River and attacked Japanese invaders on Songshan, Longling and Mangshi. Consequently, they regained Songshan on September 4 and Longling in November. They then joined forces with the 20th group army in Tengchong and advanced to the south to seize Mangshi and Ruili.

On January 20 of 1945, the invaders were finally driven out of China and the Yunnan-Myanmar Highway, which had been disconnected for more than two years, reopened to traffic.



part of the world have visited, and Wu frequently entertains them with old war songs. The most valuable article of his collections is a US army grass-green cartridge box made in 1942. But inside the box are Chinese 7.92 mm bullets.

After the war, Wu kept living in his bullet packed house, herded cattle outside the tunnels and cut grass with an army sword. He planted crops on slopes where he had often dug out bones of soldiers. Eventually he gets to know the place so well that he can differentiate Chinese soldiers from Japanese soldiers by their footprints.

### History Colours Geography

In the early morning, the golden sun rose from the far away mountains and cooking smoke carried the fragrant smell of cured meat for the lunar New Year.

Wu pointed to the mountains outside his house and told us that during the wartime period, hundreds of wounded soldiers were carried down from the Gaoligong Mountains

daily, and the narrow mountain paths were running with blood.

Who would have thought such a peaceful village would have such a tragic and stirring past?

After breakfast we set off accompanied by three guides and four mules. Winter and spring are the best seasons for people to climb the Gaoligong Mountains.

Previous page: Braved the storms of war, Shuanghong Bridge is still a vital road for the local people.

1. Gaoligong Mountains provided a natural barrier during the war years.
2. The crisscrossed tunnels built 60 years ago can still be seen now.
3. Wu Chaoming has a picture painted on the wall depicting the past warfare.



The Map of the War against Japanese Invaders in Western Yunnan



But 60 years ago, the expeditionary army had no other choice but to fight in the rainy season of May. The mountain path looked like a brook, slippery and muddy. The soldiers had to fight against the heavy gunfire of the Japanese invaders while pulling themselves up the mountains. They did not have raincoats or tents; moreover, the rainwater turned to ice higher up the mountain.

Although they were equipped with some US weapons, most of the Chinese soldiers were still inadequately prepared. Elderly residents in this area can still remember seeing the soldiers in ragged clothes and straw sandals.

The Japanese garrison in Nanqigongfang, on the other hand, could afford leather boots and nutritious meals. They built strong defence and occupied all the strategic mountain passes.

### Water Turned Red by Blood

We passed a unique stone-arch Yongding Bridge that was covered with dark green moss. The trickle of water running under the old bridge was red, possibly caused by moss or minerals. But some local people believe that it is the human blood caused by the war that turned the water red.

The mountain path became even steeper after crossing the bridge. The temperature got lower as we climbed higher. When we stopped for a break, the cold wind froze our sweat, so we dared not stop. We walked along a zigzag road

rising 25 m every 200 steps.

When the altimetre pointed to 3,100 m, we heard the cordial jingling of mule bells. A small house appeared in front of us with smoke billowing from its chimney. It was the guides ahead of us cooking our dinner. This small house is the Nanqigongfang, built as a shelter for people climbing the mountain. The old house had been destroyed during the war and the present one was built with government funding.

In the summer of 1944, the temperature was more than 35°C in the Nu River area, so the Chinese soldiers were in



## The War in Western Yunnan

The Gaoligong Mountains lie between India and Eurasia on the west of the Nu River, ranging for several hundred kilometres from south to north. This mountain range includes part of the Hengduan Mountains. Home to many rare animals and plants, the area was listed for preservation by the World Wildlife Foundation in 1992.

The Nu River originates from Jiruopaige in Tibet. Nu River is called Nagqu in Tibetan, meaning Black Water River. On the east bank of the Nu River is the snow-covered Biluo Mountain of 4,000 m, which belongs to the Nushan Mountain

ranges (an extension of the Meili Snow Mountains). On the west bank of the Nu River are the Gaoligong Mountains with an elevation of 5,000 m. The two giant mountain ranges on both sides of the Nu River create a deep gorge with a swift current. The relative altitude of the gorges is about 2,800 to 3,800 m, forming a precipitous and imposing gorge area. The Nu River flows 1,540 km in China and then flows into Myanmar (known as the Salween River) from Dehong Prefecture of Yunnan, and finally into the Andaman Sea.





summer clothes. When they fought their way up to 3,150 m it was as cold as winter. I looked at the thermometer and saw it was  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### **The Blockhouse Buried by the Silt and History**

Before dawn I was woken by the coldness. My sleeping bag was as light as paper, and the thermometer showed a temperature of eight degrees below zero. The first sunrays turned the mountain a rainbow of colours. It was so quiet, and there was not a cloud in the sky. The jingling of horse bells made the open mountain seem even more spacious. But one can still see the trenches and pits on the terraces on the opposite side; each position overlooking sheer precipices and overhanging rocks. It looked as if one man would be able to hold out against 10,000 at these strategic passes. It was here that the 346th regiment waged a desperate 19-day struggle.

The Chinese army fought vigorously, finally overrunning the Japanese on June 11. The corpses of Japanese defenders lay all over the mountain. The smell of blood had been washed away by time but the crisscross trenches and a blockhouse are witness to the gory history. The blockhouse was built to support a guerrilla war behind

the enemy lines. Now it is filled with silt washed down from the passes, and the entrance, overgrown with bamboo, is blocked. The local people told us that the Japanese invaders originally wanted to force the 2nd division to retreat to the other side of the river, but they had no way getting past the blockhouse. Later, the Japanese army made a sudden and violent attack on the rear of the blockhouse, led by a local traitor. A whole platoon of the 2nd division was killed.

It was time for us to go down the mountain. The wind was blowing hard and even the mules tried to turn their heads away from the freezing wind. The snow and water on the path was frozen. Our guides broke the ice with spades then came back to lead the mules. The first mule fell down on the path and the saddle rolled into the valley. The three other mules shied, and we had to grab them quickly before they bolted. On the way down the mountain we

1. Veterans from different townships of Tengchong County can tell many stories about that war.
2. A typewriter used during the war still works well.
3. Relics of bombs in the museum
4. Utensils left by the war
5. Blockhouse built in Nanqigongfang by the 2nd division served the expeditionary army.





continuously turned back to look at the mountain passes. The sky did not look as transparently blue as yesterday and clouds moved fast, indicating that the wind at the top of the mountain was blowing strongly. The trees on both sides of the ancient road were overgrown with hairy green moss, called tree sweaters by locals. Thick vines twined upward on the tall trees, some more than 10 m long.

### **Jiangju Town — A Post Station on the Ancient Road**

We went through the last vast expanse of azalea at sunset and then arrived at Linjiapu, a wide stretch of open land at the foot of the Gaoligong Mountains. Our destination was at the end of the long mountain footlands, the ancient town of Jiangju enveloped in cooking smoke. A highway had been built here by Japanese troops for transporting ammunition to Linjiapu.

Linjiapu is often mentioned in the history of the war. After Nanqigongfang was captured, Gangfang, Linjiapu and Jiangju on the west slope of the Gaoligong Mountains became Japanese positions. A battlefield report said that the last few Japanese soldiers stayed till August, and they eventually died of hunger.

We finally arrived at the ancient town, Jiangju, terminal of the Nanqigongfang ancient road by the last ray of the setting sun. Walking down the old street with brown wooden buildings on both sides, the clear and pleasant clatter of horses' hooves on the flagstones could be heard. Children playing on the swings all turned to look at us, but adults on the street were not as easily disturbed by strangers. According to historical records, Jiangju used to be an important post station for troops going to Myanmar during the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties (1206-1911).

### **Spirits on the Gaoligong Mountains**

When it's dark, it becomes really cold on the mountain. Seated beside the bonfire I asked old Mu, a groom, "Is it true that the mountain really has spirits?" Old Mu answered in a serious tone, "Yes, it's true. When picking herbs in the mountain several years ago, a man of our village was disturbed by a spirit. Then he was sick for a long time." Then his brother joined in and said that someone who stayed overnight on the mountain once heard roll call and troops numbering off. The two brothers talked on as if we were out of this eerie mountain.



It was common for people in the villages around the Gaoligong Mountains to tell war stories. One tale tells of a band of Japanese soldiers stationed in the Chaoyangdian. The battle there was brutal and it was said that the Japanese invaders once burned corpses near the river. A farmer herding oxen told us a familiar story, "When it rained, the water in the Jiudu River would still turn red for many years after the war." Some other villagers also told us that there were spirits in Huipo because people could hear shots, shouting, killing and bayonet charging when it rained, so people dared not stay overnight there.

Whether Nanqigongfang or Beiqigongfang, the two roads we followed were both roads of death. How many people died in the mountains? Though there is no formal report, we knew that more than 8,000 Chinese soldiers died in the battles, from crossing the river till recapturing Tengchong. Villagers of the Gaoligong Mountains will tell you that a lot of people died, and their bodies were spread all over the road. People buried the corpses, but there were too many corpses so they threw some into the valley and moved some to the roadside covered with only a thin layer of soil. A veteran in Mingshantang at the foot of the mountain who had helped bury the bodies said the road was soft when walked on for quite a long time after the war. People drank the water flowing down from the mountain,

and got sick from the water polluted by corpses.

### The Freezing Cold Leaves a Deep Impression

The road to Beiqigongfang was more challenging than the road to Nanqigongfang. Like the Nanqigongfang road, it is also an



1. Mountain pass in Nanqigongfang in red at sunrise
2. Stone steps on the ancient post road are both steep and high.
3. Specialists and scholars are doing research on the war in Gaoligong Mountains.











At sea level you can jump up the steps easily, but when you climb from morning till night from a place with an elevation of several hundreds metres to more than 3,000 m, you have to drag yourself up step by step. Records from the United States said that in the first month of the counterattack, more than 260 horses and mules died falling down the mountain valley. Even the two strong mules we hired had to be pushed and lessened the load when climbing up the narrow and steep steps.

The second night we stayed in a teahouse at an elevation of 2,700 m. There were a few flat areas on either side of the road and none was big enough for all seven of our group to lie down. Yet, the headquarters of

ancient merchant road built more than 2,000 years ago. The path is paved with numberless one-metre high steps. While pulling ourselves up, we realised how hard it must have been for ancient people to build this road and transport goods from inland to western Yunnan, Myanmar and India.

1. Mt. Gaoligong was a battlefield with the highest elevation in the war against Japanese invaders in western Yunnan. A group of girls carrying firewood are going down the mountain.
2. The Beiqigongfang house built in the past in the Gaoligong Mountains was damaged during the war. Two grooms are hanging a plaque at the old site.
3. A child is playing in a winnowing pan in Jiangju, an ancient town.





198th division was stationed here preparing to attack Lengshuigou, a position at the top of the mountain. They camped in the forest near the place we stayed without tents, dry clothes or even enough food.

We visited an old man of 80 years old who had served as a guard for the 54th corps. We asked him how the soldiers slept on the mountains. The old man told us, "They squatted under the trees in the rain, hopefully the place was big enough for the soldiers to put their feet. There was only one canvas tent which served as the office of the headquarters." How did they keep out the cold? "With a raincoat." The United States air-dropped more than twenty thousands raincoats for the counterattack troops, but most of them did not reach the soldiers because of the difficult terrain of the Gaoligong Mountains.

### **Eating Grass Roots to Stave off Hunger**

During a one-month period from May 11 to June 14, they recaptured Beiqigongfang. The soldiers fought not only with the Japanese troops who had built impregnable defense works in two years, but also cold and rain.

The Gaoligong Mountains are terribly cold in all four

seasons, and in the rainy season the rainwater turns to ice. The difference in temperature between the mountain foot and the top is 30°C. And many sections of the mountain path are muddy and slippery like a brook in the rainy season.

A Japanese soldier who was stationed in Gaoligong Mountains wrote a book after the war. He described the cold of the mountain: "The bone piercing wind of the Gaoligong Mountains made the life of the soldiers stationed there, at an altitude 5,000 m near Lengshuigou, a misery. We were tired and hungry from the fierce battles and the cold. The terrible cold threatened the life of the soldiers at all times. Though Lengshuigou near the mountain pass had an elevation of only 3,000 m, it was still very cold in summer, making people feel as if they were in a much higher place. The cold wind pierced the bone making our hands and feet numb. A soldier behind me threw his gun into the valley and cursed in a low voice, 'bastard!' Then his paper-white face began to twitch. Soldiers beside him slapped his cheeks and massaged him, but all in vain. His life slipped from the hands of his fellow soldiers."

At the same time many Chinese soldiers of the expeditionary army were also dying of cold. Tao Dagang, a corps head of the expeditionary army also recorded a



similar situation in his book: "At nine in the morning two soldiers on stretchers were carried here. They were too cold to stand and move. Their hands and cheeks were ice cold but their eyes were wide open and turned continuously. I asked the doctors to inject cardiac stimulant. But the doctors said that they did not have any cardiac stimulant. So they were moved close to the fire and fed with hot soup. But it was too late, they could not eat anything. The two soldiers died of hypothermia in front of me one after another."

It was difficult to count how many soldiers of the expeditionary army were killed in the battle and died of cold, hunger, or falls. The villagers at the foot of the mountain told us that corpses were all over the paths and valleys.

On rainy and foggy days, the air force could not drop food and ammunition, and they had to eat wild herbs and grass roots. The situation for the Japanese soldiers was even more terrible because it was impossible for them to pick wild grass on the mountain. A Japanese soldier wrote in his book: "Several horses fell in the bombing but they were still breathing. When some soldiers saw that, they jumped out of the trench and rushed to the horses to cut meat off them." And the blood of soldiers and horses turned the cold water in the ditches into red.

### A US Advisor Lays down His Life

Huipo in the east side of the Gaoligong Mountains was the first battlefield after crossing the Nu River. It is a narrow mountain ridge extending from east to west. With deep



valleys on either side it was easy to hold and difficult to attack. We came to the Gaoligong Mountains in the best season, but the expeditionary army fought their way up in the midst of flying bullets and rain. They only had broken straw sandals on their feet.

1. The old Huitong Bridge is now out of use.
2. A spare part of a crashed plane of the US allied forces is used as a bell by a primary school in Tengchong.
3. School age children pick firewood like the adults in the Gaoligong Mountains.





Among the tens of thousand soldiers, there were many Chinese generals and a lot of American soldiers too.

Several years ago Tao

passes and forest we had passed and trying to find the history deeply inserted in the silhouetted mountains. I cherished a deep respect for the great mountain.

1. Shell holes are all over the large bell made in the Ming Dynasty.
2. The teenage picture of Lu Zhenlou (a veteran of 91 years old)
3. Zhou Longyu, a veteran of 76 years old, pays respects to his fellow soldiers every year. Though he is still alive but his name has already been carved on the tombstone. It is no surprise because anything goes in the harsh turmoil years of war.

Dagang, now living in the United States, mailed us his memoirs. The 592nd regiment of the 198th division commanded by him was the main force attacking Huipo. Several hundred of his soldiers died during that battle. He also mentioned the death of Shapar, a lieutenant of the advisory group from the United States, and the first American to be shot dead in the Gaoligong Mountains on the second day of the counterattack. The reason I was familiar with the name of Shapar was that I had seen his name on the monument to the fourteen commanders and fighters of the allied army killed in the battle at the Tengchong cemetery for national martyrs.

We could image how difficult it was to attack from a lower position. Though the Chinese army were assisted by heavy artillery and the allied forces controlled the whole situation, but the mountains were steep and the paths narrow and winding. And the air force was not much help in the tangled fighting.

The moon with its chilly beams was hanging in the sky making the mountain look huge and black. I was looking for the















# Tengchong

## — Homeland for Border Guards

*Photos by Yang Yankang, Article by Sun Min*

At the foot of the Gaoligong Mountains, Tengchong is like a frontier town in mid-air. Despite thousands of years of mainstream Chinese civilisation, the nation fought to curb turmoil in the border areas. People were relocated to guard the frontiers. Situated in western China, a pathway to Southeast Asia, Tengchong has been traversed by traders for thousands of years. The town has become an ancient path and courier station. People from Tengchong, in hopes of improving their life, often leave their homeland to neighbouring regions. Some come back with a fortune; some die away from home.





**H**alf a century ago, people from the east coming to Tengchong considered it a faraway wilderness. Yet, today, this perception has become history. This little town by the borders is, in fact, not so different from other counties.

There is no better way to retrieve the wilderness of the frontier county than diving into the library at Heshun of Tengchong. For hundreds of years, different dynasties of the Empire had solidified control of this "foreign" region — leaving behind its culture and ethics.

### Guarding the Border

In Heshun, we stayed in Wenchang Palace: a classical, tranquil and elegant temple. Chinese culture considers Wenchang the god of all scholars. The temple held worship for Confucius, staged shows based on ancient scriptures, and once acted as a school. The moss-covered stony stairs at the front gate, pavilion, and fences denote the ruthlessness of time. The sunlight, rain, and wind have slowly eroded the fine works of masonry and artisans.

The Chinese here are the descendents of people

relocated from the hinterland of China to the periphery to guard the borders over past centuries. They are the offspring of forebears, who were enlisted by the Empire to come to this distant land to conquer western China. For generations, they settled and passed down the responsibility of guarding the frontiers. The culture of central China was brought here too. In Tengchong, the paper-makers living in Tengbei township come from Huguang. The households casting ploughs in the township

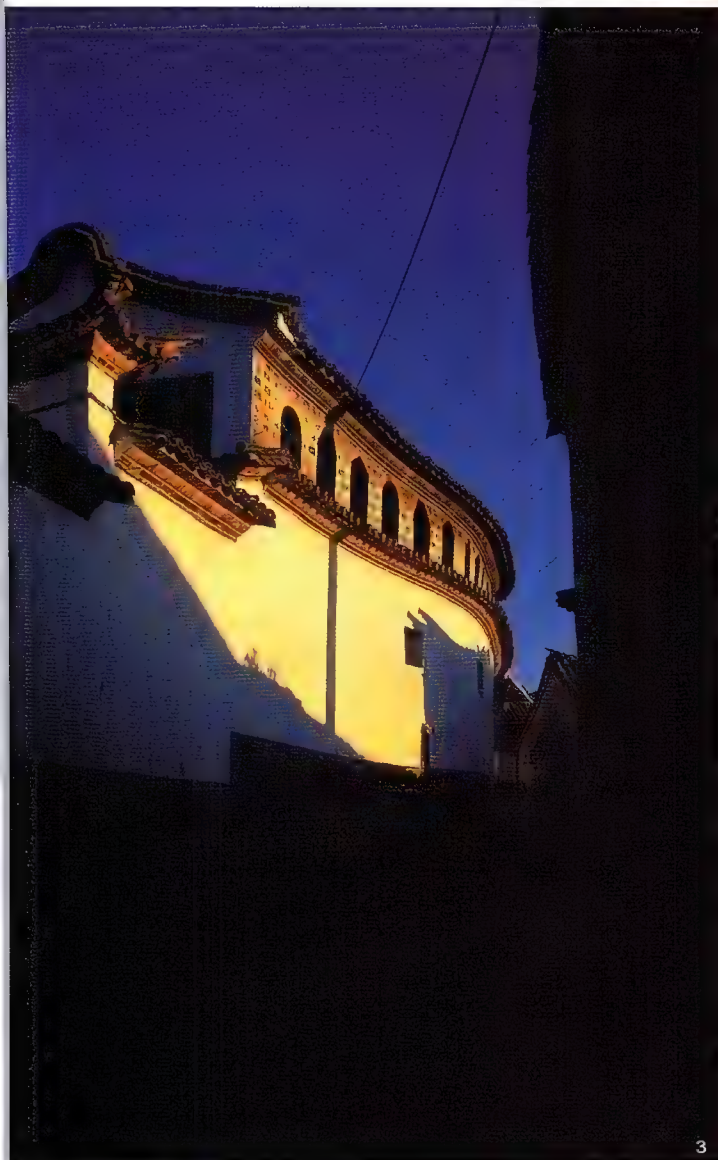




of Jiangju come from Gansu and Shensi. The soldiers in Heshun come from the Sichuan, Nanjing or Yunnan's Cunbai regiment. Above all, different people from different provinces melt into this border homeland. Nowhere other than in this western part of Yunnan are there so many people from such different origins.

### The Only Pathway to Business

In 1448, the Ming army returned from a battle in Luchuan with a landslide victory. The vice-minister in the military obtained an imperial decree to lead 15,000 border guards to build a stone fortress in



Tengchong. Tengchong prospered ever since, and the industrial and commercial activities flourished. In addition, academic institutes, private schools, and colleges mushroomed. Hidden beyond large houses and courtyards are people eager to tell you about the mansions of the wealthy traders of the old days. Some of these houses have tumbled down, fading away. Yet, each of them was once occupied by tycoons whose overseas trade reached as far as India, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and even Europe.

For 2000 years, Tengchong has been the hub of the Southwest Silk Road. Traders and travellers heading westwards to Southeast Asia had to pass through Tengchong, the last foothold before leaving the Mainland. Through all this time, this channel has never been blocked, and people can enter Yunnan from Sichuan or Guangxi. Since the Qin and Han dynasties, the southbound ancient road was opened, allowing people to pass the hills and rivers in western Sichuan province.

The years of the Qing Dynasty when the country was closed to outsiders did not obstruct the flow of this road. People over the centuries tried paving their dreams and desires along this path to the west. Those born in the region were well acquainted with the winding hilly tracks and the dangers of the rivers. They knew how to climb over mountains to reach the foreign utopia in search of their dreams. Older generations from Heshun call the journey to Myanmar the only vein of life for them to make a living.

**Previous page: An overview of Tengchong County**

1. The elders in Heshun Township gather underneath this tree, reminiscing the past.
2. Arches and tablets with strong cultural characteristics from central China could be found easily in Heshun.
3. Some lose their lives in outlandish soul; yet, some come home with a fortune.
4. Beyond the mud township gate of Dongguan live the villagers in tranquillity.





Success stories of entrepreneurs have become local legends. The highly decorated pillars in Heshun, lofty walls and grand courtyards of mansions are witness to the prosperous era. Newcomers to Heshun are easily lured by the bright side of the coin while being oblivious of the hardships and frugal lifestyle that the early entrepreneurs endured.

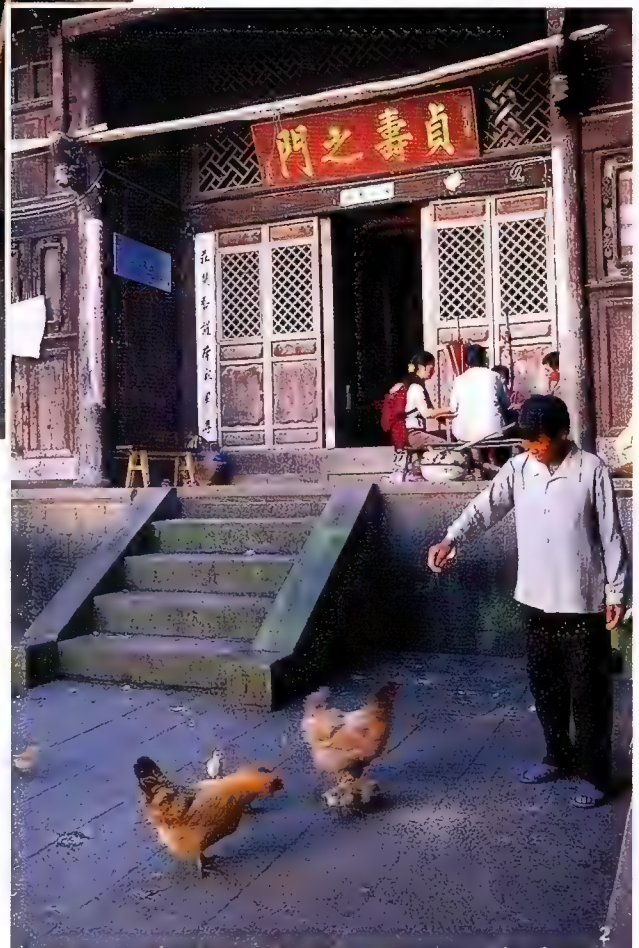
### The Sorrows of the Widows

A saying in Tengchong: "If you're poor, go south; if you're desperate, go to Chang (the region formerly ruled by Mengli, now Myitkyina and Bhamo regions of Myanmar)." The regions there are well known for their jade and gems. The poor people from western Sichuan marched to this distant land. Heshun is small yet has a large population. To

make a living, people have to leave. Men mostly go to Myanmar to work and those who stay behind are despised.

In the mid-18th century, Britain took over Myanmar and India. The trade between China and the subcontinent, as a result, flourished. That was also the high time when people from Tengchong went to the south for a new life. Caravans passed incessantly from the Mainland to Myanmar and India. "Amber arches and jade bridges" was the way people described the wealth in Tengchong. But the journeys to their dreams were tough and dreary. However fortunate the successors seemed, their lives were scarred by many heartbreaking stories.

The arches and tablets pledging the chastity and loyalty of the widows tell you the price people paid. Men left their homeland, wives and children behind hoping for a better life. Some came back with a fortune to build huge mansions; some never came back, their bones scattering the foreign soil.







When I went to Heshun years ago, I overheard two old ladies in their 70s chatting by the grandly carved old table. They were talking about their husbands: one had a husband who died young in Myanmar and the other never heard of her husband again after he had left for Taiwan. Countless widows like them can be found in Heshun. In the past, Heshun even prided itself and built arches for the numerous women who committed to remain widows.

Widows come in all kinds: some are widowed a few months after marriage, when their husband left for Myanmar and died; some husbands remarried in Myanmar and rarely came back.

Old Yang, an elderly woman I met, said her husband headed for Myanmar three months after their wedding. A couple of years later, he died. Now, the 88-year-old has been a widow for 71 years, since she was 17.

### **Never Let Your Daughter Marry a Heshun Man**

Another old lady, Mrs. Yin, was married at 19. A year

later, her husband went to Yunnan cadet school in Kunming. After the war broke out, he joined the battle and became a lieutenant, a captain, and then a major. After defeating the Japanese army, he came home. Mrs. Yin thought that she could have a life together with him thereafter. Yet, her dream only lasted five years. When her husband was 47, he was accused of counter-revolution. Persecuted to death, the husband did not live more than six years with his wife.

1. The elderly woman. Mrs. Cun's husband never came back after leaving for business. She never remarries and still keeps the picture of her husband.
2. The tablet that marks "A life of chastity" is bought with tears and blood. It is now fastened in a dignified manner up in the house. A few women are playing mahjong underneath it.
3. Those dainty and tiny shoes, in the past, were made for use. Now, they are made for tourists. The lady with her once bounded feet is a century and 6 months old, and is selling the dainty shoes made by herself.
4. The numerous arches of chastity and loyalty are a gem in Heshun.





"My dad died in Myanmar in his 20s and my mom was widowed since," she continued. "As a little girl, I always heard mom sing, 'elder sister comes home weeping to her parents. Never let your daughter marry a Heshun man or she will enjoy half a year of marriage and suffer decades of widowhood.' We did not understand what the lyrics meant when we were little. When we finally understood, the predicament of our mothers had already befallen us."

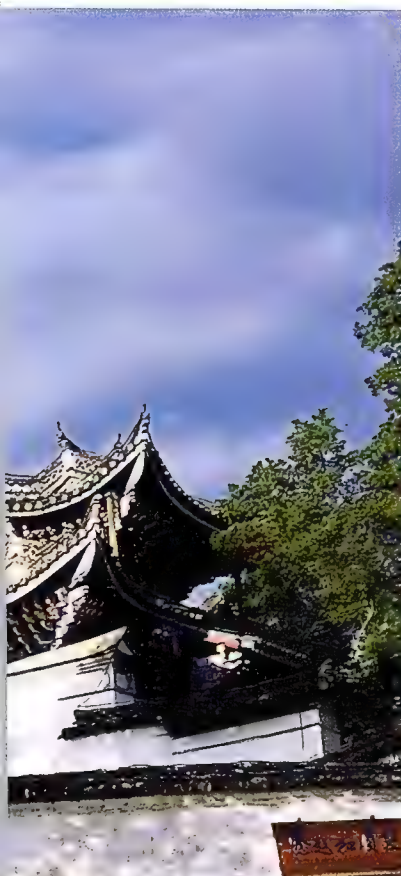
The giant mansions in Heshun have become tourist attractions. In the midst of tourists roaming around the arches, does anyone ever realise the names carved there are not names worth boasting of? Instead, they are the scars in

the hearts of women over generations.

### **The Library: a Lighthouse to the Frontier**

Passing the Shuanghong (Double Rainbow) Bridge, one can see the Heshun library situated in a garden. The place is tranquil and graceful. Placed in the early 20th century in a Chinese village, this library opened a gate between the old and new worlds, a gate to knowledge for the public. Opened in 1938, the library obtained the most updated information through the trading path to Myanmar in the past. The news such as the Boxer Uprising, the Revolution of 1911, the First World War, and the May Fourth





was financed by donations. Donating books, in an instant, became a trend. Whoever got a good book would sign his or her name, and write "To Heshun Library", a gesture giving a sense of pride. The tradition of donating books lasted until the early 1980s. In 1938, the library had a collection of 20,000 books, a dozen kinds of

1. Heshun library is situated on the village paths.
2. The collections of Heshun library are impressive. They range from the Four Collections, the Ten Thousand Articles, Buddha Scriptures, Heshun Chorography to translated western literature in the 30s and 40s.
3. Reading enlightens the mind of many people.

Movement, all denote an era of great change between the old and new. The revolutionary and democratic thoughts of new China and the civilisation of the west entered here via Myanmar.

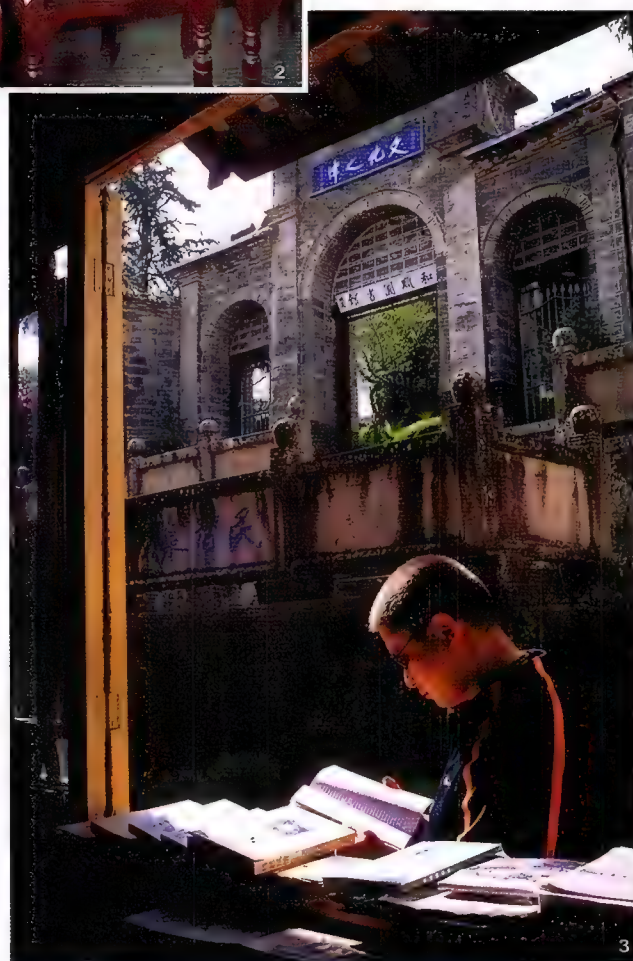
Out of every 10 men in Heshun, eight or nine of them went to Myanmar to make a living. As such, a lot of young men's desire and passion for modern

knowledge was ignited.

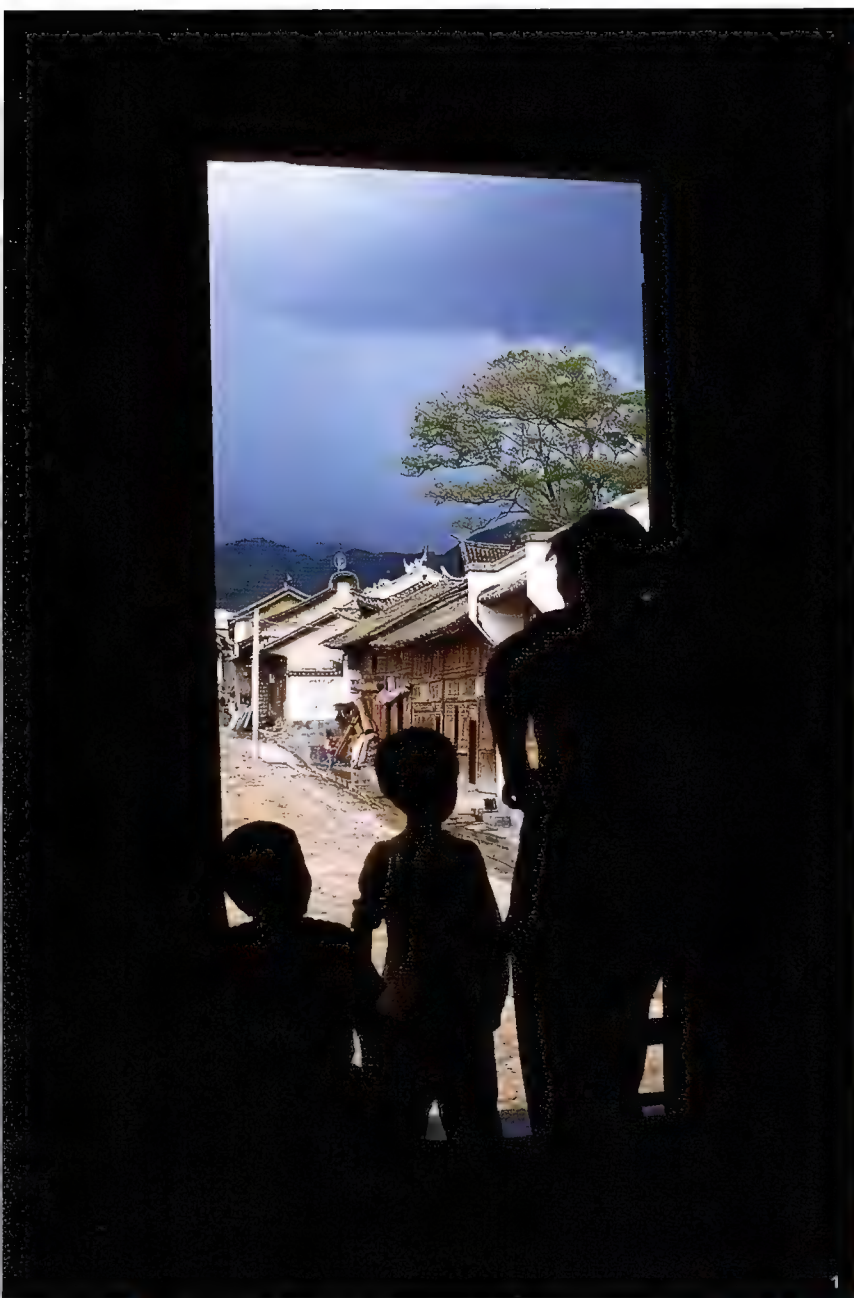
These young men were the ones bringing new culture to the villagers. They formed the Youth Association and Xianxin Society in Myanmar as well as home, and they began to discuss social and national issues. In 1924, the youngsters who founded Heshun Press also held regular talks.

### Proud to Be Donors

In 1928, the press became a library. All the big traders and tycoons in Heshun donated money to run the library and buy books. Since the first day the press was founded, it







All these items, together with every single piece of glass, were carried by caravan from Myanmar. Heshun library, from the beginning, used the latest library classification system from the United States. All these foreign materials and methods were not just decorations. The young librarians were knowledgeable.

### A Channel for Passing Wartime News

After the Manchurian Incident, the latest news from Myanmar took eight days to get to Heshun. Granted permission from the first border general office in Yunnan, an official telegram would be delivered to the library on a daily basis. The library would have it copied and posted on the streets. With a few dozen subscriptions of newspapers and magazines, both national and overseas, the library was flooded with readers. The war broke out on January 28, 1932, which delayed the post. Faithful readers, however, lined up constantly outside the library. Yin Dadian, a native of Heshun, brought home from Myanmar a radio and donated it to the library. Locals were invited to the library to listen to the radio everyday. The library even had announcements from the radio recorded and printed every three days — founding the Three-Day Radio News. Later, it became Daily News, reporting the latest war news. Due to the immense subscriptions, the library had to collect a small sum from readers. When the battle against the Japanese started, the Tengyue Daily was born.

During the Cultural Revolution, Red Guards pulled down the walls and tiles of the library despite the protest of the old librarians. Seven decades of ups and downs — including the scrutiny of the Kuomintang Party, the Japanese invasion, the rampage of the Cultural Revolution — have not destroyed the library. It keeps its original system and collection.

1. Heshun library

2. The elegant and antique library setting

newspapers and more than 30 magazine titles. Meanwhile, in 1993, Nankai University in Tianjin held 85,000 Chinese books, Zhongfa University in Beijing 65,000, Datong University in Shanghai 24,000, and Tonghu University in Shanghai 28,000 copies. A little village library — Heshun library, had caught up with the university libraries! In the development of libraries in China, the miracle of Heshun library should not be undermined.

The passage of the decades has made the library facilities out of date. Yet, you can still tell the uniqueness of the traditional Chinese architecture: the British-made iron gate; the US-produced padlock on the gate made a century ago; the index cabinets, locks, barrel bolts, and handles were all made overseas.







## The Ancient Oil Lamp of Tengchong

Photos by Yang Yankang Article by Li Zheng

**O**ur generation grew up with old oil lamps. The whole family, young and old, would surround the old oil lamps to study, chat and sew. The majority of the lamps were homemade bamboo lamps. The rich would use the extravagant imported lamps brought by caravans from Myanmar, India and Hong Kong.

### Competition among the Rich

After nightfall, shops on the main road would be lit with various lamps. Going through the streets gives you a view of different kinds of kerosene lights from all corners of the world.

Many kerosene lights arrived in Tengchong through caravans via Myanmar. In the mid-19th century, when Myanmar was a British colony, trade was booming and many lights and lamps from the west were brought in. These "foreign lights" were not only luminous and wind-proof, but also adjustable in brightness and user-friendly. As such, it became a trend for people going to Myanmar to bring home a few kerosene lamps. Apart from being practical, they had to be decorative and ostentatious. Lamps to the rich, for some time, acted as a symbol of their wealth.

### Childhood Memories under the Oil Lamps

Scared of the dark, as a little boy, I hurried to light the oil lamps at home when night fell. On our table sat a copper

"Buddhist Lamp". It was used to worship heavenly and earthly gods and ancestors.

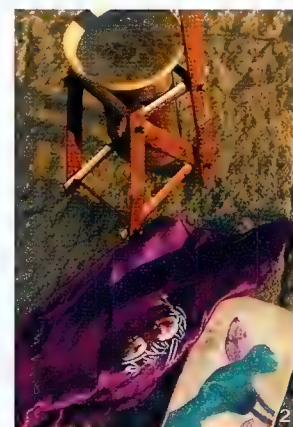
Hanging lamps were easy to make, yet not unattractive. They could be hung on walls or put on tables. The oil used to come in two kinds: one fragrant and another nauseating. Most people used the foul oil.

Mother and I often shared a hanging lamp. The beam of light was as small as a pea and very dim. With a tiny buff of breeze, the little light would flicker violently. My mother's needle and thread travelled swiftly under the light, while I would do my homework. Every now and then, I would peep at my mother's embroidery. When the candlewick burnt to its end, it would explode into a little bright red "wick flower".

Mother considered it a good sign. With my homework done, mother often read me stories till I fell asleep. My father taught out of town and came home on holidays. He would tell me stories and recite ancient verses under the dim oil lamps.

Little kids not only loved to light up the oil lamps, but also to play with them. I would join village children carrying lamps around when visiting my grandma who lived in the village. The lamps were made of melons. The core of the melon had to be scraped empty, and then two pieces of bamboo would be stuck into the melon as handles. We then put a coin inside the emptied core of the melon, and tied it with a candlewick. The outside of the melon, therefore, became a lampshade. We made lotus flower lamps with a petal from the lotus flower, and again put a candlewick inside tied to a coin. We lit them, and put them on water, and let them flow along the current.

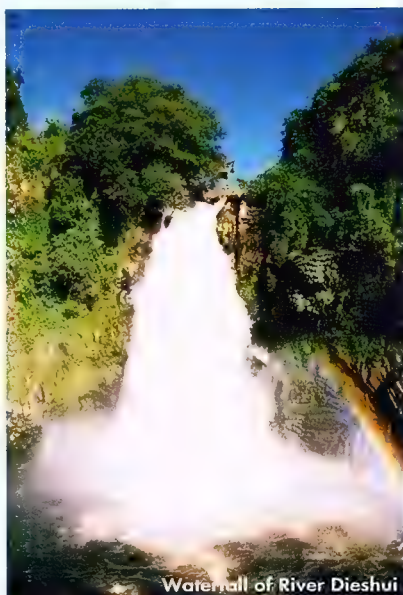
Nowadays, in Tengchong, some older generations still place their kerosene lamps, brought from Myanmar, in their living rooms. It commemorates the hardships of their forebears and denotes the glory of their ancestors. Of course, it also preserves a history of luminosity before the arrival of electricity.



1. The writer has a collection of oil lamps from different parts of the world.
2. The embroideries the writer's mother made under the bamboo oil lamp.



# Travel Tips



Waterfall of River Dieshui

## Mt. Gaoligong

The ride from Kunming to Baoshan is 490 km. You can fly (it takes 45 min and costs 440 yuan\*) or go by car (it takes 12 hours and costs 155 yuan). Accommodation in Baoshan is easy to find, and there are guesthouses of different standards, costing from 60 -200 yuan.

There are two roads passing through Mt. Gaoligong: Nanzhaigongfang (Southern route), and Beizhaigongfang (Northern route).

### Nanzhaigongfang route:

Start at Baoshan, and arrive at the end of highway of Nanzhaigongfang of Mt. Gaoligong: Baihualing (Hundred Flowers Peak). The route is 119 km. If you travel on your own, you can rent a car in Baoshan, and take public transport to Baihualing. Go up the hill for 11 km, and change to another car. The whole route takes about a day. If you arrive early, you can take a bath at the waterfalls of Zao tanghe Spring at Baihualing.

Baihualing is the starting point of the trek. You can stay at the National Reserve Research Tourist Centre at Mt. Gaoligong. Backpackers need to apply for a mountain entrance permit there.

There is a village house about a hundred metres from the Reserve Centre, and the host is called Wu Chaoming. He has a little family museum about the war against the Japanese invasion. You can stay in his very clean and comfortable home, for 15 yuan a night. You need a guide to take you into the mountains, and a horse if you have a lot of gear. The cost of hiring a horse and a guide is 100 yuan a day. You need to prepare enough food and supplies for two days.

Nanzhaigongfang route takes the locals one

day to finish. Travellers can cut the trek into segments and hike according to fitness. Travellers in decent shape usually finish the hike in two days. Jiangju Old Town is 57 km from Tengchong, and buses run the route.

### Beizhaigongfang route:

Beizhaigongfang starts on the western slope. The route from Kunming to Tengchong is 650 km, while Baoshan to Tengchong is 160 km. All are reachable by public transport. From Tengchong to Huangjiazai in Beizhaigongfang is 50 km. You can rent a car at Tengchong or take public transport to Jietou and change to another bus there.

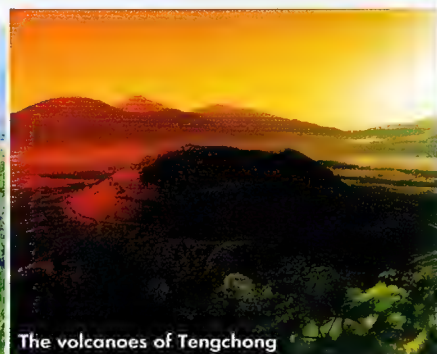
There is no guesthouse in Huangjiazai. You can talk to the village council and stay there. Or, you can stay with the family where you hire a horse.

Climbing the mountains from Huangjiazai takes three days, including photo stops. There are campsites along the way and your guide will show you water sources.

The destination is Manying. The little guesthouses there are mediocre, but clean. From Manying, you can take a bus to Baoshan.



Beihai National Marshes



The volcanoes of Tengchong

### Best traveling seasons and gears:

The best season is between October and May. In February and March, the Nu River is crystal clear. Both sides of the shore blossom with silk cotton flowers. Meanwhile, the snow-coated peaks are complemented by patches of azalea, and golden fields of oilseed rape flowers. In October, Mt. Gaoligong is covered by golden rice paddies. The autumn scenery, red leaves, and colourful plants make for perfect photography.

As the Nu River is about 700 m above sea level, the temperature is rather high. Sometimes, the temperature in winter climbs up to 30°C, and even higher in summer. On the other hand, both Nanzhaigongfang and Beizhaigongfang are located at high altitude, about 3,100 m above sea level. Therefore, the temperature differences between the peaks and the river valleys can be 20 to 30°C. Whenever you travel, you need to bring along winter and summer clothes. Also, a tent, sleeping

bag, torch and a good pair of hiking boots are a must.

### Guesthouse prices in Tengchong:

Tengchong is packed with different accommodation:

Rehai (Hot Sea) Hotel (2-star) .....	260 yuan
Mingzhu (Pearl) Hotel (2-star) .....	260 yuan
Financial Training Institute (2-star) ....	120~200 yuan
Tengchong guesthouse (2-star) .....	80~168 yuan
Jindi (Golden Emperor) guesthouse (2-star) ....	120~178 yuan
Hecun Hotel (2-star) .....	100~188 yuan
Honglian Hotel (2-star) .....	80~148 yuan
Linze Mansion (2-star) .....	60~100 yuan
Feicui (Jade) Guesthouse (2-star) .....	60~120 yuan

### Travel Agents Price List:

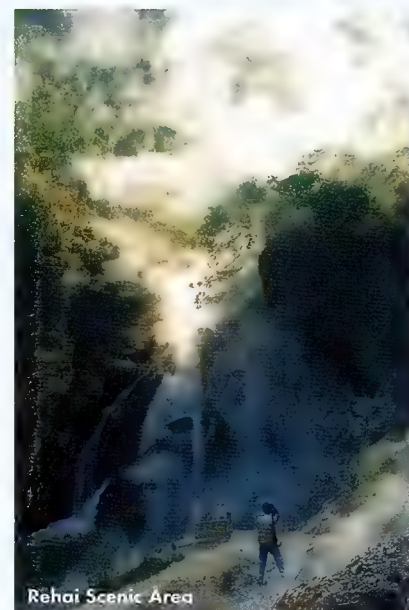
Tour costs 460 yuan/day/person, including transport, accommodation, natural reserve fees and guide.

Contact: Yunnan Baoshan Mt. Gaoligong Ecotourism Development Centre (Mr. Li Zhengbo)

Telephone: (86)875-2162768 13987581269

Fax: (86) 875-2120288

Email: glgs@bs.yn.cninfo.net



Rehai Scenic Area

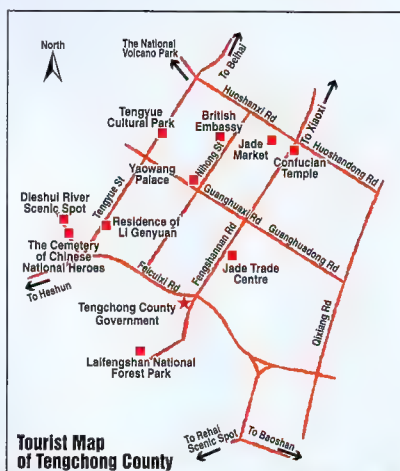
\*US \$1 ~ 8 yuan



## Attractions

### Volcanoes National Park:

Dubbed the "Natural Geological Museum", Tengchong County is situated in the renowned Alpine-Himalayas active geological zone, between the Indian tectonic plate and the Euro-Asian plate.



### Beihai National Marshes:

Beihai Marshes are located 12 km east of Tengchong County, near the Qinhai and Beihai lakes.

Entrance Fee: 21 yuan

### Heshun Township:

Heshun is a renowned township in Yunnan. It has been a culturally advanced town for centuries. The highly acclaimed "Cultural Cradle", Heshun Library, is the largest village library in China, founded in 1924 by Chinese donors. The library is based on traditional Chinese architecture, with front courtyard and graceful and elegant decorations. Over 10,000 books are kept in the library. You can visit different scenic spots in the town: Double Rainbow Bridge; Laundry Pagoda; The Lui's Court; the Lui's Family Temple; Aisiqi's Residence; Yuanlong Attic, and Zhongtian Pagoda.

Entrance fee: 40 yuan

### The Cemetery of Chinese National Heroes

Situated on one of the slopes of the waterfall, this 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> cemetery is the final resting place for 9000 Chinese heroes who fought to liberate Heshun during WW II.

The centre of the cemetery is the Loyal and Patriotic Shrine. Behind the Shrine is a pointed pagoda made of volcanic rock found in Tengchong. The hilly slopes are covered with graves.

Entrance Fee: 10 yuan

### Mt. Yunfeng

Mt. Yunfeng is in Ruitian township, 50 km northwest of Tengchong. Shaped like a bamboo shoot, at the peak of Yunfeng rests a Taoist temple. Entrance Fee: 74 yuan

### Travel Agents

Wuzhou Travel Agent

Telephone: (86)875-5184029

Fax: (86)875-5184029

Kunming Volcanic Rehai Travel Agent

Telephone: (86)871-8322928



Rehai Scenic Area



The Cemetery of Chinese National Heroes

Here, there are 97 dormant volcanoes, 23 with complete craters. Most are located in Heshun and Mazheng. There are diverse volcanic landscapes.

Entrance Fee: 20 yuan

### Rehai Scenic Area:

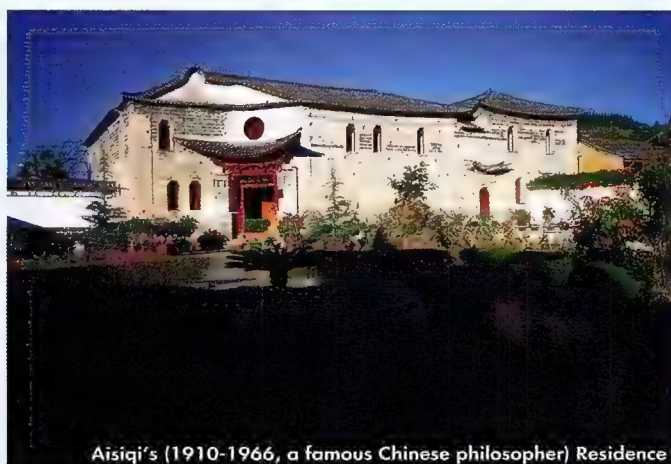
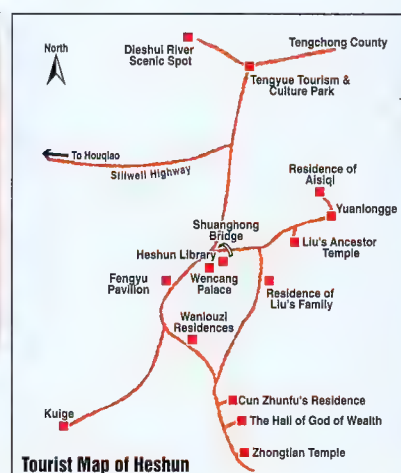
Tengchong is situated in the famous geothermal zone. There are 64 known geothermal-active regions in the area, and 80 hot springs with the highest water temperature 96.3°C. The hottest, most violent and impressive one is Tengchong Rehai, 20 km west of the town. This site covers a total of nine square kilometres offering a great display of geothermal activity. The Boiling Pots, Pool of Beauty, Lion's Head, Pearl Spring, Drumming Spring, Pregnant Well, Fairy Bathhouse, and Bathhouse Waterfall are some scenic spots in the area.

Entrance Fee: 31 yuan

### Waterfall Region of River Dieshui:

The waterfall springs from the River Daying in the northeast of Tengchong county. It is a waterfall formed from solidified lava on the river course. The river flows from north to south, passing through the dam in Tengchong, and plugs abruptly at the lava-formed cliff. Thus, a giant and spectacular waterfall is created, with a vertical fall of 46 m.

Entrance fee: 10 yuan



Aisiqi's (1910-1966, a famous Chinese philosopher) Residence

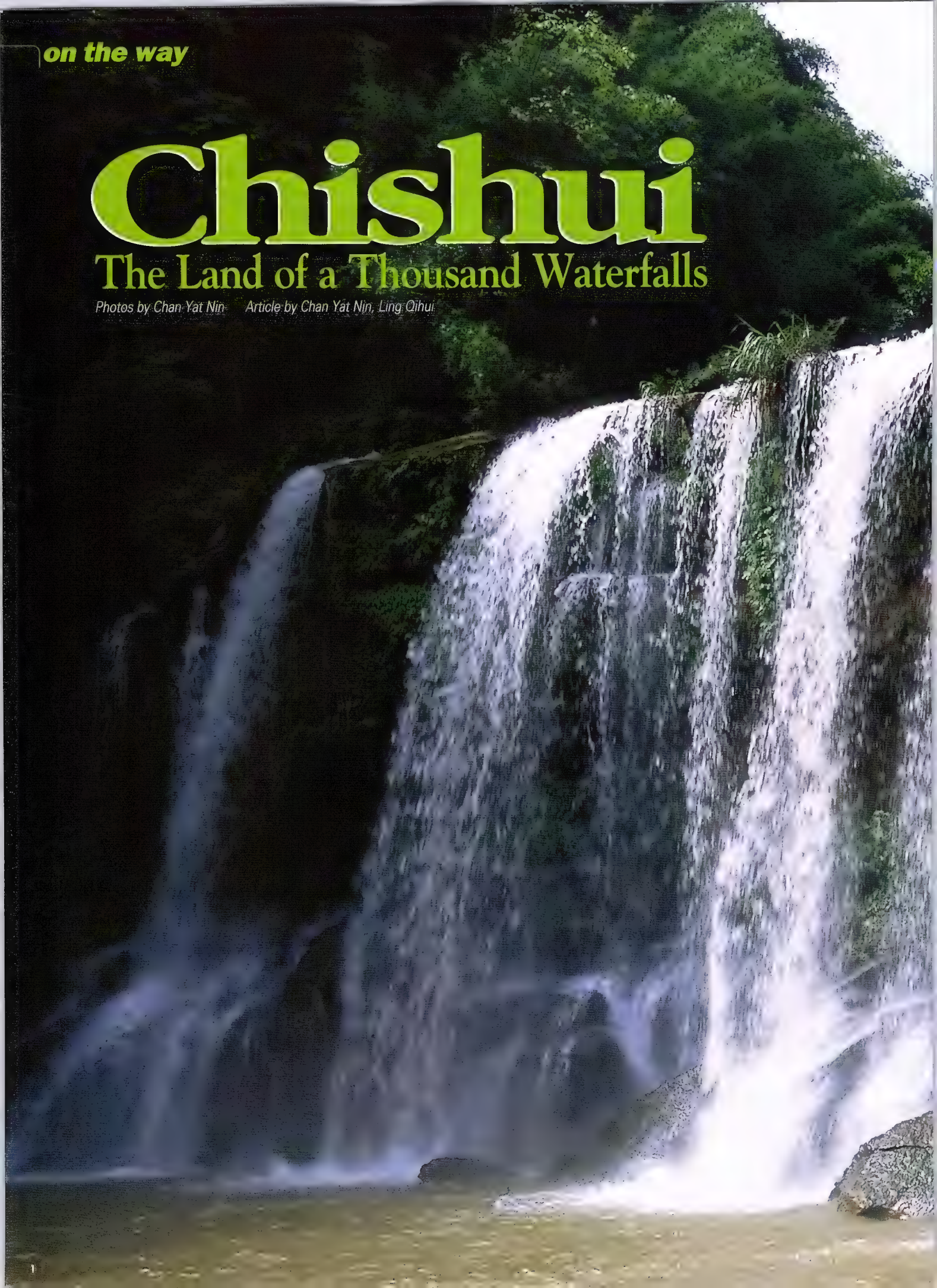


on the way

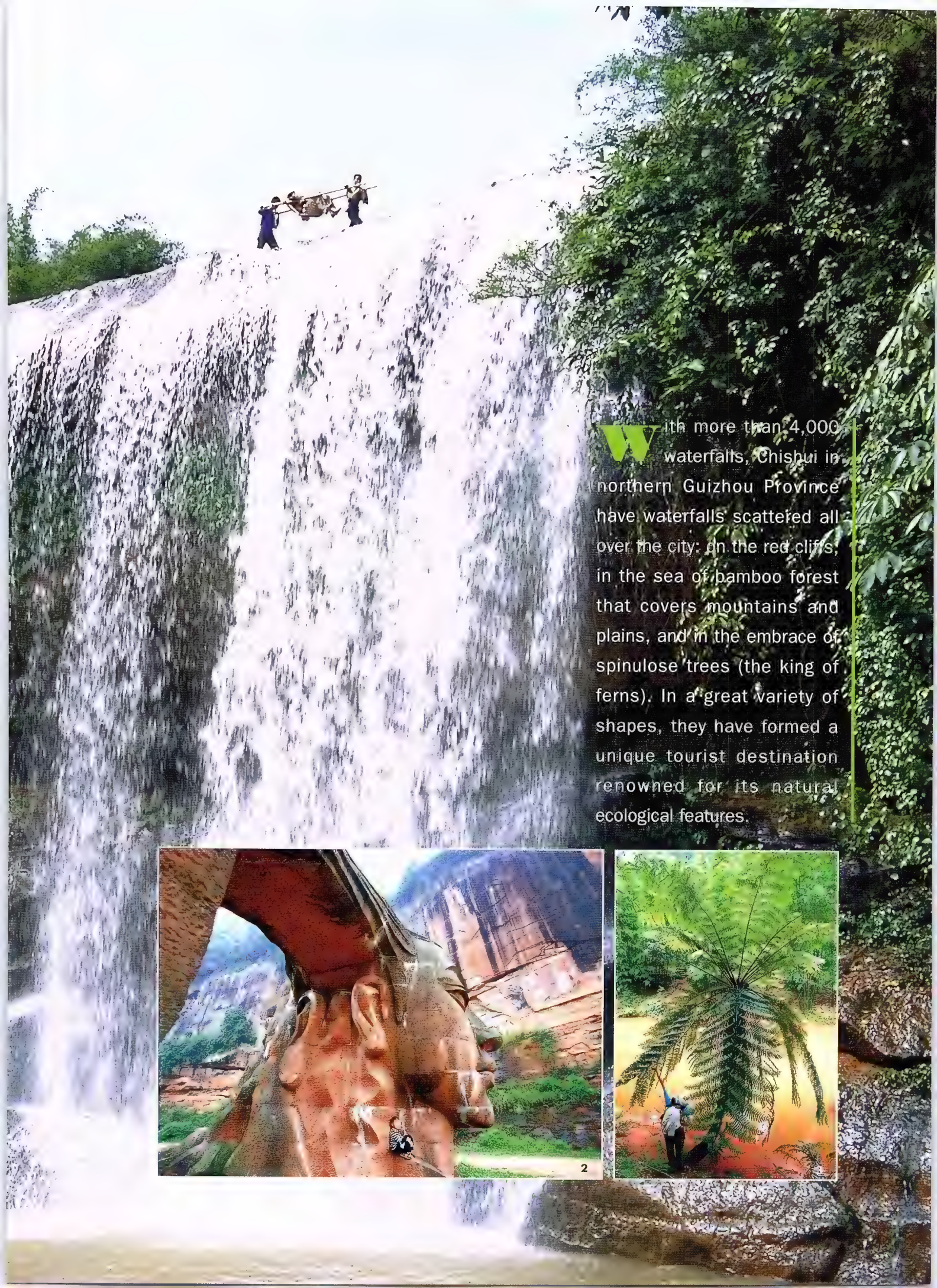
# Chishui

## The Land of a Thousand Waterfalls

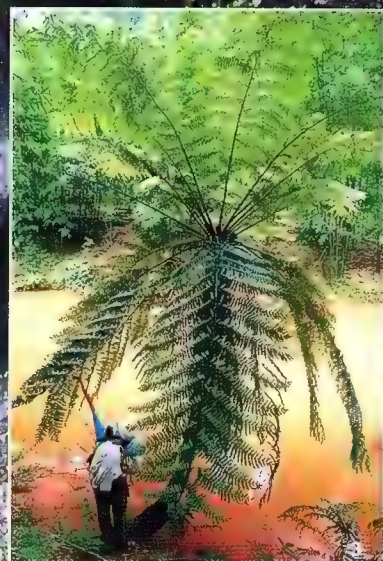
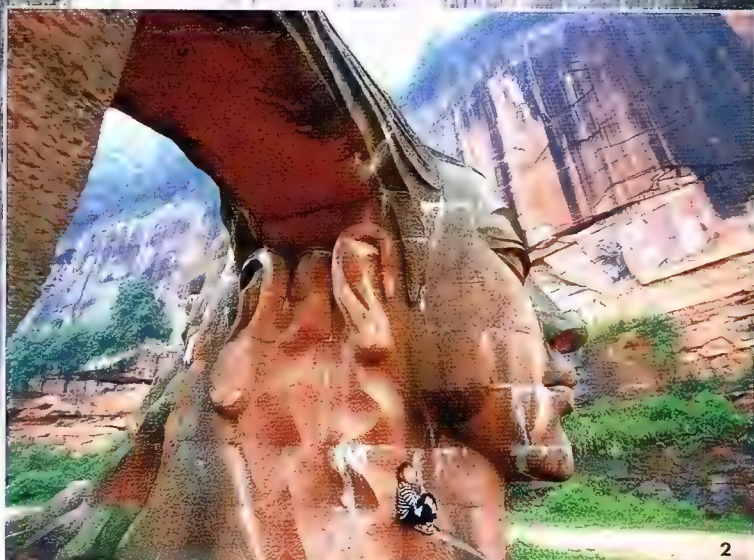
Photos by Chan Yat Nin    Article by Chan Yat Nin, Ling Qihui







With more than 4,000 waterfalls, Chishui in northern Guizhou Province have waterfalls scattered all over the city: on the red cliffs, in the sea of bamboo forest that covers mountains and plains, and in the embrace of spinulose trees (the king of ferns). In a great variety of shapes, they have formed a unique tourist destination renowned for its natural ecological features.





**I**n the stone wall of the Zhijin (Weaving Gold) Cave, a noted scenic area in Guizhou Province, are carved two lines, "No more mountains after returning from Mt. Huangshan; no more caves after seeing Zhijin Cave". Yet after our trip to Chishui City in northern Guizhou Province, I think we should add one more line, "No more waterfalls after returning from Chishui".

### A Waterfall Every Kilometre

Settling down in Chishui City, we learned the city is separated from Sichuan Province only by the Chishui River, which runs across and brings its name to this most northern county-level city in Guizhou. As for the name Chishui, which means red river, it is easily understood by a glance: the river valley is mostly formed of red sandstone, which makes the river red. As the city is located on a slope from the Yunnan and Guizhou Plateau to Sichuan Basin, the valleys fall sharply down from high mountains. Just an abundant rainfall is enough to make

many waterfalls and swift flowing rivers come into being.

Among legions of waterfalls, the most famous is Shizhang Cave Waterfall, which was our first destination.

The Shizhang Cave Waterfall can be found some 39 km south of the city proper. A newly built road winds along the river valley flanked by green mountains. The green woods on the mountain were covered with lush foliage. Trickling small brooks gathered into waterfalls, hanging from sharp red cliffs or among the fresh green trees. Counting carefully, we could find one waterfall almost every kilometre in the area; in some places, they come in groups stretching one after another. Our eyes darted right and left as we shouted eagerly with each new discovery. The waterfalls flow in all shapes and ways—some gushing forward along an arc before



1

#### Previous page:

1. The Water-Screen Cave Waterfall in Sidong Waterfall Group. People can walk through the cave behind the falls.
2. The entrance to the Shizhang Cave Waterfall is made from carved red sandstone.
3. The tall spinulose tree is known as the "King of the Fern". This relic plant of the dinosaur age can be found all over the valleys at Chishui.

#### This page:

1. In Sidong Gorge scenic area, many people take the sedan chairs which cost 50 yuan per trip. (by Ling Qichong)
2. The powerful and majestic Shizhang Cave Falls is the largest waterfall at Chishui.
3. Bailongtan Falls is the biggest waterfall of the Sidong Gorge Waterfall Group.



2







splashing down in a shower of flying pearls; some twisting and turning on the hillside rushing down to the bottom of the cliff; some brimming over the green grass and drooping vines slowly and gracefully like the floating hair of a young girl....

### Chasing "Buddha's Halo"

Stunning scenery accompanied us all the way to the Shizhang Cave Waterfall. When we heard a rumbling sound coming from the valley, we were excited even before we could see the falls. Taking out our cameras in haste, we followed the guide down

the red sandstone steps. Just half way down the mountain, we were caught in a shower of spray that covered our hair with white dew, but still we had not seen the falls. Suddenly, a magnificent view appeared before us: a huge "water wall" surged down, creating a vast expanse of white mist that permeated the whole valley. All of us became wild with excitement, shouting and waving our arms like crazy, but our voices were lost in the roaring sound of the waterfall. The sight and majestic sound of the waterfalls were very similar to what we saw and experienced at

Huangguoshu Falls in Guizhou—the biggest waterfall in China. But right before us, this gigantic waterfall was 76 m high and 81 m wide, which is eight metres higher than the Huangguoshu Falls, yet one metre narrower.

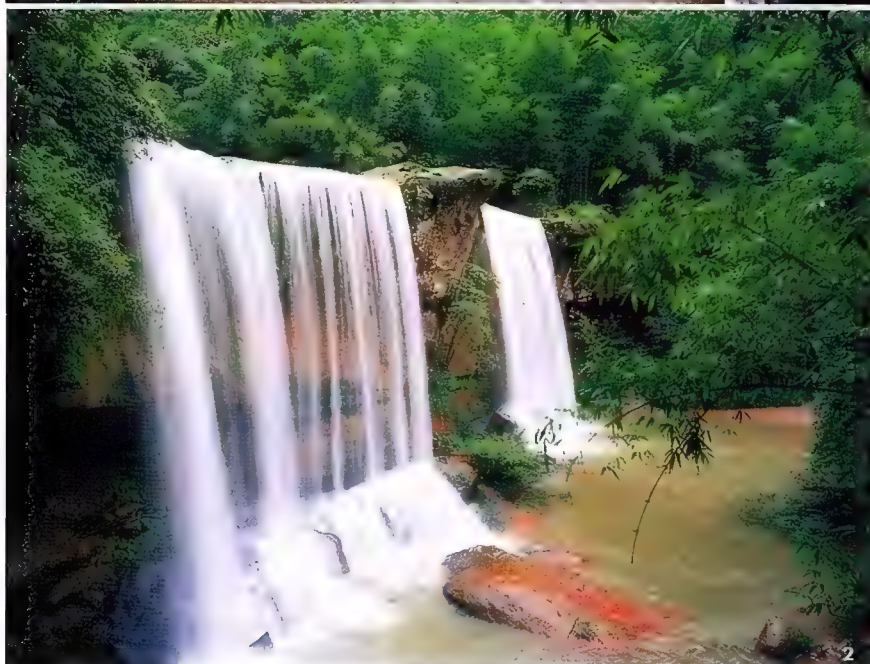
Even Yige, the most experienced of us, became so thrilled that he forgot to use his umbrella and raincoat, and his camera was drenched waerfall with the spraying water. He had to wipe his lens repeatedly, which was caught in the rain again as soon as he hastily snapped off a single picture. But he was the most fruitful, because he was the only one who saw the "Buddha's Halo". In Shizhang Cave Waterfall, it is not too difficult to see a rainbow on a sunny afternoon. Yet the "Buddha's Halo" is rare and only a lucky few see it.

After the Shizhang Cave Waterfall, we came down to the Zhongdong (Middle Cave) Waterfall below, which is 75 m wide and 20 m high. It hangs between two mountain peaks, its waters falling down smoothly like a curtain in the shape of a comb pointing down. Hence the locals call it the "Beauty's Comb." Geologists believe that it is the most typical curtain-shaped waterfall in China.

Moistened over the years by the mist from the waterfall, the plants around the Shizhang Cave Waterfall are flourishing. Cuckoos and camellias are everywhere, together with spinulose tree fern, Chinese tulip trees, Phoebe trees, and other precious species. The charming scenery and beautiful plants complement each other, making a feast for the eyes. It is a pity that we were too occupied with the waterfalls and none of us looked at these exotic plants as we passed by.

### Waterfalls as Varied as Country Fairs

In the following two days, we toured scenic areas one after another as if we were attending country fairs: Yanzi (Swallow) Crag National Forest Park, Sidong (Four-cave) Gorge







Waterfall Group, Gangou (Sweet Gorge) Waterfall Group, Chinese Jurassic Park, Zhuhai (Bamboo Sea) National Forest Park, and Lianghekou (Two-Estuary) Waterfall. Although they feature mostly waterfall groups and natural ecology, each of them has its different views and appeal.

Sidong Gorge Waterfall Group is a valley with a series of four big steps of

waterfalls and many small cascades. The most interesting among them is the Water-Screen Cave Falls in the first step on the lower reaches. It is 37.5 m wide, 31 m high, hanging down like a pearl curtain behind which people can walk through the cave. Here you can feel the momentum of a mighty current as powerful as the thunderbolt. The biggest fall in the gorge is the Bailongtan (White Dragon Pool) Waterfall on the upper reaches. Some 60 m high and 23 m wide, its current changes as it flows, looking powerful as well as graceful.

Seen from afar, Yanzi Crag to the north of Shizhang Cave Waterfall seems like a mountain covered by the virgin forest. But a closer look reveals it to be a ravine that is much deeper than the others around, both precipitous and dangerous. The highest waterfall at Yanzi Crag hangs 87.3 m in height, and it's a spectacular sight seeing the huge water column pouring down from the red cliff. With great effort, we climbed the red cliff of Yanzi Crag. Standing behind the huge

water column, we began to relax. But a look at the water column smashing to pieces at the bottom of the ravine made us feel weak again.

The Gangou Waterfall group, is 40 km southeast of Chishui City. Although it is obviously less imposing than others, it has all the charming elegance of a young maid. It is a V-shaped gorge in the Chishui Spinulose Tree National Nature Reserve. Stretching 4.5 km, the gorge has an excellent ecological environment, with water flowing in innumerable cascades and with vegetation flanking cliffs as luxuriant as a tropical rain forest. We walked up along the gorge and came to a 27-step cascade. The



1. Children in Chishui are well mannered. Whenever there is a car passing by, they would stop walking and salute.
2. The Feiwa (Flying Frog) Crag Fall, winding its way through the bamboo forest, is imbued with a poetic beauty.
3. It is enchanting and secluded in the bamboo forest.
4. Most of the local people make a living from bamboo handicrafts.





water flows down in curves, just like a slim fairy in white gauze sailing in gracefully....

### The Kingdom of Spinulose Trees

The Spinulose Tree Nature Reserve where the Gangou Waterfall is located is named the Chinese Jurassic Park.

The spinulose tree is a kind of tree

fern that grew some 200 million years ago, flourishing during the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods of the Mesozoic Era. Spinulose tree ferns grew together with dinosaurs until after the Ice Age of the Quaternary Period when most of the ancient animals and plants disappeared from the earth. Most of the spinulose tree ferns also faded away at that time.

What remains has become a very rare relic plant of the earlier Ice Age. We didn't expect to see the almost extinct spinulose tree fern growing in large numbers here. It seemed time had turned back millions of years.

Chishui has a natural concentration of spinulose trees rarely seen anywhere in the world, with over 60,000—the largest number and the widest area of such forest in the world. Scientists call Chishui “the

kingdom of the spinulose tree fern”. In this 133-km<sup>2</sup> protected area, the natural ecological environment is very similar to that of the Jurassic Period, which typically had a dense concentration of spinulose trees.

The spinulose trees average four to six metres high, and the highest is eight to nine metres tall. The big leaves in the shape of phoenix tails

### Tasting Bamboo in the Bamboo Sea

The saying goes, “Those living on a mountain live off the mountain; those living near the water live off the water”. For people living in the bamboo town of Chishui, it is only natural to live off the bamboo. Indeed we saw people here not only making bamboo their major business, but also actually eating bamboo everyday. So we just followed the local customs in Chishui and made bamboo our daily food and drink.

After eating more bamboo shoots on the trip than we had ever in our lives, we learnt that there are many types of bamboo shoots, such as tube bamboo shoots, winter bamboo shoots, bitter bamboo shoots, and many others, each with its own flavour.

Among the many ways of cooking, the most impressive is tube bamboo shoots and cured meat cooked together in a boiler. Tube bamboo shoots are fresh bamboo shoots dried in the sun or smoked

with firewood (the two methods can leave different colours on the bamboo shoots—the former lighter, the latter darker; and result in different tastes). After tube bamboo shoots are boiled together or cooked on a slow fire with cured meat, the meat is sliced and served on a plate, while the bamboo shoots are eaten with soup. The cured meat in Chishui is unique in that it tastes refreshing, the fat not at all greasy but crystallised like ice. So we call it “glassy cured meat”.





are in fact formed of many sawtooth feather leaf groups. In the dim light, they look beautifully bright in light grass green. Touching these prehistoric plants reminded us of the dinosaur's world and gave us a feeling of mystery.

### Cruising the Bamboo Sea

Chishui is also called the "Bamboo Sea" because of the bamboo groves everywhere. The most imposing bamboo sea can be found in the Zhuhai (Bamboo Sea) National Forest Park some 40 km southeast of the city.

The types of bamboo in Chishui mostly consist of moso (*Phyllostachys pubescens*), Chizhu (*Sasa longiligulata*) and ku zhu (*P. bambusoides* Sieb. et Zucc. var). In the Bamboo Sea Park, the bamboo is mostly *Phyllostachys pubescens*. The older they are, the darker their colour.

The bamboo here is mostly quite old. The locals told us that only when the mature bamboo is cut, can the new ones grow, and hence, the forest will multiply endlessly and expand into a "sea." The bamboo sea has been formed after hundreds of years of growth.

Walking on the path paved of red sandstones and breathing the fresh fragrance all the way into the bamboo

forest, we looked up from time to time to appreciate the whirling bamboo branch tips. Before we knew it, we were in front of the Sea View Tower. It was only after we climbed the tower that we realized why we came all the way up here: standing on the tower one can see the undulating mountains are fully blanketed by bamboo trees, which look like sea waves when blown in the mountain wind. We had read many poems and seen paintings

bamboo, but none matched the feeling of actually being immersed in the bamboo sea.

*Translated by L. Yu*

1. Bamboo forest over the hills and dales
2. Bamboo goes with every meal, and bamboo shoots are the most common dish.
3. Made by boiling rice with mung beans and cubed bacon, bamboo tube rice has the fragrance of bamboo.
4. The smoked cured meat is refreshing.
5. These are dried bamboo fungus eggs.



What we had eaten most in the past were winter bamboo shoots, or hydrated dried slices of tender bamboo shoot. It was the first time we had ever eaten the bitter bamboo shoots, which are boiled as soup. The sliced bamboo shoots are eaten with condiments, tasting refreshingly crisp but bitter. We were not used to it at first, but at the second meal we just couldn't have enough.

There are many kinds of mountain delicacies in the Bamboo Sea, with

the wild fungi being the most common, including bamboo fungus, Jiangbei (North of the River) fungus, Jitui (Chicken Leg) fungus, Shuaba (Brush Handle) fungus, pine fungus, and edible black fungus. We had eaten bamboo fungus before, but had never heard of "bamboo fungus eggs". They turned out to be the bud before the bamboo fungus begins to show its net-shaped body out of the ground. When stir-fried together with meat, the bamboo fungus eggs are delicious.

Condensed bean curd jelly is a dish we ordered every meal. The dish is made by grinding soya beans, black soya beans or mung beans, with bamboo water into bean curd jelly. The dish made with black soya beans is the most popular. The soup is also a favourite drink for local people. Bamboo water is spring water conducted by bamboo tubes from the bamboo forest to the village. You can imagine how refreshing and sweet the water is. In fact, we had never had such a delicious condensed bean curd jelly before.

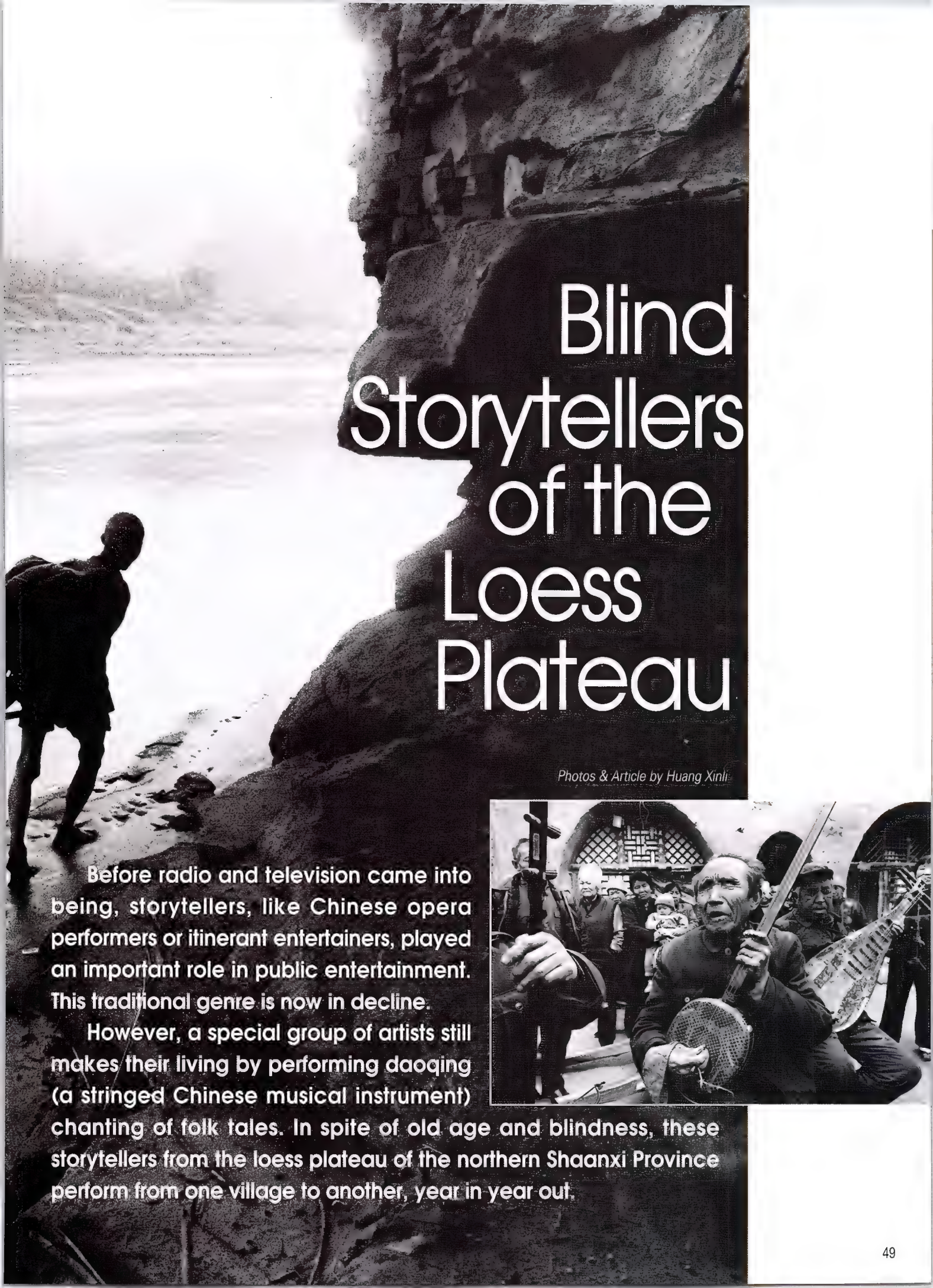




*discoveries*







# Blind Storytellers of the Loess Plateau

*Photos & Article by Huang Xinli*

Before radio and television came into being, storytellers, like Chinese opera performers or itinerant entertainers, played an important role in public entertainment. This traditional genre is now in decline.

However, a special group of artists still makes their living by performing daoqing (a stringed Chinese musical instrument) chanting of folk tales. In spite of old age and blindness, these storytellers from the loess plateau of the northern Shaanxi Province perform from one village to another, year in year out.





The nasty big rooster outside the cave dwelling crowed for the third time. Li Shouwang knocked out his long-stemmed pipe and urged, "Get up, quick." I crawled out from my warm quilt reluctantly. My watch showed that it was a quarter past five. After bustling around getting ready, it was getting light. Soon we were on the way to Lijiawa Village five kilometres away.

### A Precarious Living

Li Shouwang in his 60s is the head of the last daoqing storytelling troupe of blind artists on the loess plateau. Initially composed of several dozen blind artists, now it has, including Li himself, only about eight members left. He works in an area of three to four towns to the west of the Yellow River.

These blind performers started their journey from the mouth of the Guzhen River five days ago. It was the eighth day of the third lunar month, the time set during their performance last autumn. Li Shouwang, Zhang Chengiang, 70, Zhang Guangchun, 54, and Ma Guorong, 56, had been going round on foot for 50 days, threading through 130 villages. The journey measured nearly 500 km.

They call Li Shouwang "the head" in front of strangers but address him as "the boss" in private. Locally, the "boss" indicates that he is a man of wealth, but Shouwang is not rich. He just takes charge of the money they have earned on their rounds. Despite being blind, Li Shouwang is a very earnest man who has a mind of his own. He can express himself very well and he has a way to entertain his audience.

We got to Lijiawa Village before nine in the morning and went straight to the village head's home. Since the host was not in, the hostess greeted us and had us rest on the brick bed. Before long, the daughter of the family called her father back from sheep herding. At the sight of the village head, Li Shouwang let out the opening chant in a loud guttural voice, "Once inside the gate, we lift our heads to find what an unique family this is. The walls are high, the courtyards wide and the gate has animal heads as designs. There are mosaic up-turned eaves with ceramic tiles, and

small carts standing in the courtyards. There's a tree calling in money in the front yard, a horse in the back, and the gardens boasting a bumper harvest."

Beginning his career in this field at the age of 19, Li Shouwang has given nearly 10,000 performances in the past 40 years and more. Being quick-witted, he composes some verses and chants them impromptu at the opening and end of every performance. This thrills the audience from the opening to the end. His delightful performance usually stirs up roars of laughter from the hosts. In such joyful circumstances, the audience is often generous with money. For one act they can make 30 yuan in a big village, 20 yuan in a medium-sized one, like Lijiawa, and about 10 yuan in a small village.



Being a farmer himself, the village head is candid and kind. He was busy preparing tea and making noodles. In no time, bowls of piping hot noodles were laid on the table. In early spring, farmers lack vegetables. What we found on the table was oil, salt, soybeans and vinegar, the daily seasoning for every household here, in addition to a dish of pickled Chinese cabbage.

Before leaving the village, Li Shouwang chanted to the village head, "Well done the village head. Very delicious are the noodles his wife makes. With lard floating on the surface of the noodles, one bowl after another we ate. My belly filled; the village head I praise. The host is very kind; this household is really nice."

After this, the group moved to the next village two-and-



a-half kilometres away. Losing one's sight is a serious matter, but the blind artists go on visiting villages or households with the help of special escorts sent by each village. It is an ironclad rule set in olden days and has remained unchanged for thousands of years.

The blind artists usually visit four villages every day. If the journey is long, they will only make two or three visits. Sometimes, after a lot of effort, they get to a village to find the village head who takes charge of matters is out. They have to wait for him to return. If he has gone to a far away place, they have made a fruitless trip. Cases like this occur very frequently. Li Shouwang and his old mates have been working together for 30 years. They gather together every year and share evenly the payment they get. Each round they get about 600-700 yuan per head. With this income they can support themselves for six months.

### Television the Death Knell

Li Shouwang learned storytelling from a veteran artist in northern Shaanxi Province at the age of 16. In 1964 when he was 19, he became one of the members of a performing arts team. His parents were happy to have their blind son working for the state. Blind storytellers were then divided according to grade. The daily pay for Grade A was 2 yuan, Grade B 1.8 yuan (~US 25¢), and Grade C 1.6 yuan. Being a young actor then, Li Shouwang gave performances while learning from veteran artists. The team performed frequently at worksites on terraced fields organised by the county authorities. During the 10-year Cultural Revolution, they were to put on some Beijing operas. He once acted Yang Zirong, the leading role in Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy, Li Yuhe in The Red Lantern, and even Granny Sha in Shajiabang.

"At a regional report performance with the presence of some big shots, we were ordered to stop halfway through our performance. They alleged that all the heroes and heroines in the model operas are majestic-looking and have bright piercing eyes. And we sightless performers were not permitted to play the Beijing operas any more. We had to shift to other items.

Previous page (main photo) : Living on storytelling, the blind artists go on two performing tours in spring and autumn every year. Each tour they spend 70-80 days, threading through 100-200 villages.

Previous page (small photo): The humorous folk-tale chanting performed by Zhang Chenxiang, a master artist, leads us to the dreamland of ancient folk tales. With rich artistic appeal, the chanting reverberated on the ancient plateau.

1. The age-old daoqing chanting has existed on the loess plateau for nearly 1,000 years. The main musical instruments include sanxian lute, siyin and clappers.
2. Every time when the blind artists pay a visit, the friendly hosts entertain their guests with dates, deep-fried rice cakes and homemade yellow rice wine.
3. Under the scorching sun in summer, the trip is full of hardships for the old blind men. They collect straw from the roadside to weave a makeshift hat for shelter from the strong sunlight.
4. Within two months, the blind people travel on foot to more than 100 villages. Occasionally some kind villagers let them have a ride.







"Local people like listening to storytelling after all. In addition to food, I got a monthly pay of several dozen yuan. I was pleased with myself, because I thought my life was better than an average worker. Since the 1990s, electricity has reached remote mountain villages and TV is now popular. You can watch anything you like by switching on the TV. The happy life of us storytellers is drawing to an end."

Li Shouwang became the team head in 1967, with over 40 subordinates at the peak. Divided into seven to eight groups, they went south to Yan'an and north to Yulin. They could gather just once a year.

"Now there are only seven to eight of us. The youngest member is already over 50 years old. A couple of days ago, one of our members passed away. Even the county theatrical troupe has been disbanded; the members have to shift for themselves. What can we blind men do? Some go to work as fortune-tellers; some seek refuge with their relatives or friends." This said, Li Shouwang stared helplessly with eyes that saw nothing.

### Fuse into a Emotional Unity

At dusk, rays of slanting sunlight dyed the hills ahead orange. Halfway up the hills cooking smoke rose from the cave dwellings, mantling the gully with a veil of silver. The village ahead is known as Yangquanshan, our destination that night. Near the entrance of the village there is a huge cliff with a stream of clear and sweet spring water pouring out at its foot. Li Guangchun said he visited this place when he was 20. Villagers coming to fetch spring water hailed the old artists from afar. Children shuttling beside the arriving group shouted excitedly, "Here are the storytellers! We are going to have a show tonight." The quiet village became boisterous in a moment.

Before nightfall the village was seething with excitement. Villagers bringing their stools had already occupied spots in the courtyard. Bonfires were roaring, kids frolicking around, girls grouping together in threes or fives, while old folks puffed away at their long-stemmed pipes on one side. Sipping the strong tea prepared for them by the hosts, the blind artists fished out unhurriedly sanxian (three-stringed lute) and other traditional musical instruments from their cloth bags and tuned up before the performance. At the gate, a few busybodies stretched their necks in the hope of spying into the secrets of the blind artists through the

### Do You Know?

There are about 60 million disabled people in China, occupying five percent of the total population of the country. 14.6% of them are visually impaired.

In China, of every five households on average one has a disabled member.

There are 1.78 million disabled people in Shaanxi Province, 41,000 are visually impaired.

The 13th Sunday in May every year is China's Disabled People Day.





gaps of the crowd. When it was dark, the bangzi (wooden clappers) clattered the opening of the show. To the accompaniment of the musical instruments, the 73-year-old Zhang Chenxiang began to chant, "Once the sanxian is sounding, the storyteller begins to sing. Thank you for coming to listen to an inexperienced storyteller like me. I didn't learn anything when a boy and for dozens of years. I've learned nothing from the theatrical troupe I'm in. I have not much knowledge and am awkward in speech. You can say I've accomplished nothing in my life if you like, but as bold as I, Chenxiang never has a stage fright."

Zhang Chenxiang, nicknamed Feizhou (Flying Boat), is a well-known storyteller in northern Shaanxi. He specialises in sanxian lute, erhu (two-stringed fiddle), banhu fiddle, suona horn and many other percussion instruments. Hence his title, "Quanwuyin" (the full five-tone scale). No one can compete with him in the Yulin region and the county seats of Suide and Qingjian. Over 70, he often goes with Shouwang's group to perform in different villages. Printed in his mind are nearly 100 operas that he can play very well. That night he played *The Reunion of Liu Qiao*, *Four Goddesses Descend to the World*, as well as *A Tale of the Gold Sword* that depicts the Yang Family Generals in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). He is full of wit and humour; the roles he plays are remarkably lifelike. The performance was imbued with the wisdom and ability of an experienced artist. In response to the repeated "encores", the old man threw away his coat and played *Meeting at the Floral Pavilion*, one of the representative items of Daoqing

storytelling. Coming to the plot when the character suffered an injustice, the old artist shifted his singing to quick time. When the character in the opera was boiling with rage, silence reigned for some time before the audience wept with closed eyes, using sleeves as handkerchiefs. Then the victim avenged and the old artist's acting was sublime. The audience joined in the singing and the place was filled with thunderous roaring.

"Storytellers are lunatics and listeners idiots" — only then did I comprehend the true meaning of this local saying.

### A Lifelong Tie with Daoqing Storytelling

The yard finally emptied at midnight when the moon hung high in the sky like a silver plate. The remaining bonfires shivered and cast their reflection on the window lattices. Zhang Chenxiang sat on the brick bed, puffing hard at his long-stemmed pipe as if he was still acting. I chatted

1. After denouncing fearful celestials and evil ghosts in an act, they are invited to a house to performance a peaceful plot. Now the performers have become something like a bride for currying favour with celestials.
2. The blind artists have brought a happy atmosphere. The ancient daoqing chanting and storytelling have been well received by young and old.
3. The eighteenth day of the second lunar month this year is the day the blind artists have fixed for a tour performance. Li Guangchun living in Yangjiaqu Village has to cover more than 10 km of mountain path to join his other three companions.
4. In the minds of the village children, the blind people have inexhaustible folk tales and interesting stories. Each time the blind artists come to the village they are pestered by excited children with endless questions.





with him while the others were sound asleep.

When he was three years old, there were three hailstorms in his hometown during one spring. As a result, not a single grain of crops was harvested. In the wake, smallpox ran roughshod. He was one of the sufferers, having a high fever for five days. Blisters as big as a fingertip appeared all over his face. He was on the verge of death. His family rushed 35 km along a mountain path, begged for a dose of traditional herb medicine, and hurried back the same night. The medicine helped the boy finally get through the disease. However, after his high temperature finally reduced to normal, he lost his sight forever.

Five years later, his parents exchanged 250 kg of millet for a sheep-hide sanxian lute. They drove a mule carrying

two baskets, one holding a big goat, the other their 8-year-old son, and sent the boy to learn theatrical art from a celebrated artist living 25 km from them. Actually they hoped that their son could earn a living by himself. As an apprentice for several years, he went through all sorts of hardships.

"I was eight or nine years old then, not taller than a table. All day long I had to go everywhere with my master to sing and beg. In winter, it was frigid. The strings peeled off your finger skin when you touched them. In summer, I had to endure the bites of mosquitoes and insects, as well as the sun that can scorch you there. I had to carry all the musical instruments on my back and trekked up and down at my master's heels. Sometimes, I was too tired and dropped into sleep while walking. On one occasion I fell into a gully and broke my front teeth. I longed for home very much and even thought of running away. But I could not see the way, where would I go? My master was very strict with me. I had to get up very early to recite scripts. If I couldn't memorise the lines I would receive a flogging. After the punishment, I could not even hold a lute."

"Later, I came to know the world. I thought that storytelling was a way of living for the blind. If I could master the skills I would not go hungry. Gradually I got used to the situation. After two years' learning, I had learned some of the programs. On some occasions when my master was tired, I could act as a substitute for him. In the third year, my master gave me my share of the money we earned. In the fourth year I went home with a sack of imported wheat flour to celebrate the Spring Festival. The whole family had a huge dinner of dumplings with mutton stuffing. I achieved stardom at the age of 14 and was known within a circle of 50 km.

One year in autumn, I was acting in a village by the Yellow River and met two government workers. They carried me with a donkey to Suide County, hundreds of kilometres away. In 1944, I joined the county cultural troupe and performed storytelling together with Han Qixiang, an eminent artist of daoqing storytelling. The piece, *Chanting for Emancipation*, was known to every household. It was composed and put on by a government musical worker from the then Yan'an Lu Xun Art College. He made use of the Aihai Tune from the Qingjian daoqing storytelling of the East Route that we sang regularly in the region. It won a prize abroad later. Now it is performed all over the country.

"At the age of 21, I was married. My maternal uncle acted as the matchmaker. We have two sons and a daughter." The old man owed his good fortune to the blessings of his ancestors.

"Then I returned to the county troupe with my wife. I worked as a performer of folk-tale chanting and she took charge of the props. When my eldest son grew up, he also



learned to perform in the same troupe as his mother. He has become a noted wusheng (military male role) in the troupe. My second son is now in Xi'an. He is a government office worker. He's doing quite well there." The old man is most proud of his daughter. Working at a regional song and dance troupe, she has been promoted from actress to writer and director. Some of her works have won prizes and been broadcast on TV.

Talking about his present situation, he was unwilling to say more, but I know a little about it. The troupe to which he belonged has been disbanded. Those who took part in public service as the old man did before 1949, get a monthly pension of less than 100 yuan from the county authorities. Although his children give him financial help from time to time, the old man is too prideful to be a burden of his children. As long as he can move about, he loathes staying at home idly. Besides, having a tie with the art for 60 years, he is in high spirits when he performs. He just cannot part with his lute. Following his team leader Li Shouwang to give performances twice a year, he feels very happy after shouting and chanting to his heart's content.

When the long chat drew to an end, it was getting light. I urged him to get some sleep, because they had to start their journey in the morning. As for myself, I was in a state of half-dreaming and half-awaking with the shadow of the old man shuttling before my eyes.

### Becoming a Historical Memory

Northern Shaanxi in March is in mid spring. The earth has shed its monotonous colours. Green tender willow twigs were swaying in the wind. Flowers of pink peach, snow-white pear and fresh and bright-coloured apricot vie with each other in full bloom. Every day I followed the blind artists, listening to their storytelling and chanting, and to the tales told by senior villagers.

There was no electricity, movie or TV broadcast on the loess plateau in the past. The arrival of the blind performers was welcome news for the villagers. The old artists could play many roles, tell stories and chant to the accompaniment of musical instruments. The villagers enjoyed the performance and they could easily while away the long nights of the north. The troupe of blind artists attracted villagers everywhere. Some theatre fans even turned up at every act, oblivious of the distance they travel and their farming duty. The 56-year-old Zhang Guangchun, the youngest in the group, was blinded at the age of 22. He told me that when he was a boy, he was crazy about daoqing storytelling. He tagged along with the blind men's troupe from one village to another for dozens of days.

He could not remember how many times he had watched the same item. The outcome is that he can recite the lines from memory. His parents were very anxious, looking for him hither and thither. They covered dozens of kilometres and finally pulled him out of the audience.

In ordinary times, the blind men could be busy with other matters. When villagers dig a well, pray to the Dragon King for rain, ask the God of Earth for luck in house building or beg the Goddess of Mercy to endow a pregnant woman with a baby son, they would invite the blind artists to chant. At the moment, there is no knowing whether the blind artists serve as a bridge connecting celestials with people, or as a bride for currying favour with celestials.

Usually, before they enter the courtyard, a freshly slaughtered fat sheep is boiling in a big cauldron by the brick bed. The chanting of folk tales goes on wildly on the bed and in the yard while the sweet smell of mutton diffuses in all directions. When the chanting comes to an end, the mutton is done. The cooked mutton in a coarse porcelain basin is then placed on the brick bed laid with felt rug. Pouring full bowls of homemade rice wine, the hosts entertain the artists to a sumptuous dinner.

With the change of the times, the chanting of folk tales and storytelling of the blind artists in northern Shaanxi are fading away before the sight of our generation. Soon these artists will be as lost to view as their own long faded sight.



*Translated by Anju K.*

1. With the increase of modern civilisation since the 1980s, the villages TVs and movies gradually take the place of the ancient folk-tale chanting. There will be no successors of this ancient genre of art.
5. Li Shouwang, who lost his wife in middle age, has a son and a daughter. The son works in a city far away while his invalid daughter has to depend on his financial assistance. Whenever he meets his grandson he kisses him incessantly. Country folk are especially affectionate between grandparents and grandchildren.







1. Receiving and sending off the blind men is a rule unchanged for thousands of years on the loess plateau. The blind artists are set out escorted by villagers before dawn every day.
2. People living on the loess plateau are very helpful and generous.
3. This short flute is the best companion to the veteran artist Zhang Chenxiang.







# Readership Survey

*China Tourism* always appreciates feedback from its readers. In accordance with your suggestions, we have recently added a variety of new columns. Still, we need to know more of your opinions, including criticisms and suggestions. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us. Thank you!

Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism*.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Climbing the Mt. Gaoligong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chishui — The Land of a Thousand Waterfalls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loess Plateau's Blind Storytellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harbin: A Century of Russian Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Hunting Ground of Genghis Khan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel Tips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Art Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Opinions:					

Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of trips to China in the last 5 years: \_\_\_\_\_

## Where (how) did you first see *China Tourism*?

☐ Subscription ☐ Newsstand or bookstore

☐ Hotel Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Others \_\_\_\_\_

## Main purpose for reading *China Tourism*?

☐ Planning trips ☐ General interest in China's customs, scenery, etc. ☐ Business

☐ Tourist Trade purposes ☐ Others \_\_\_\_\_

## What do you like most about *China Tourism*?

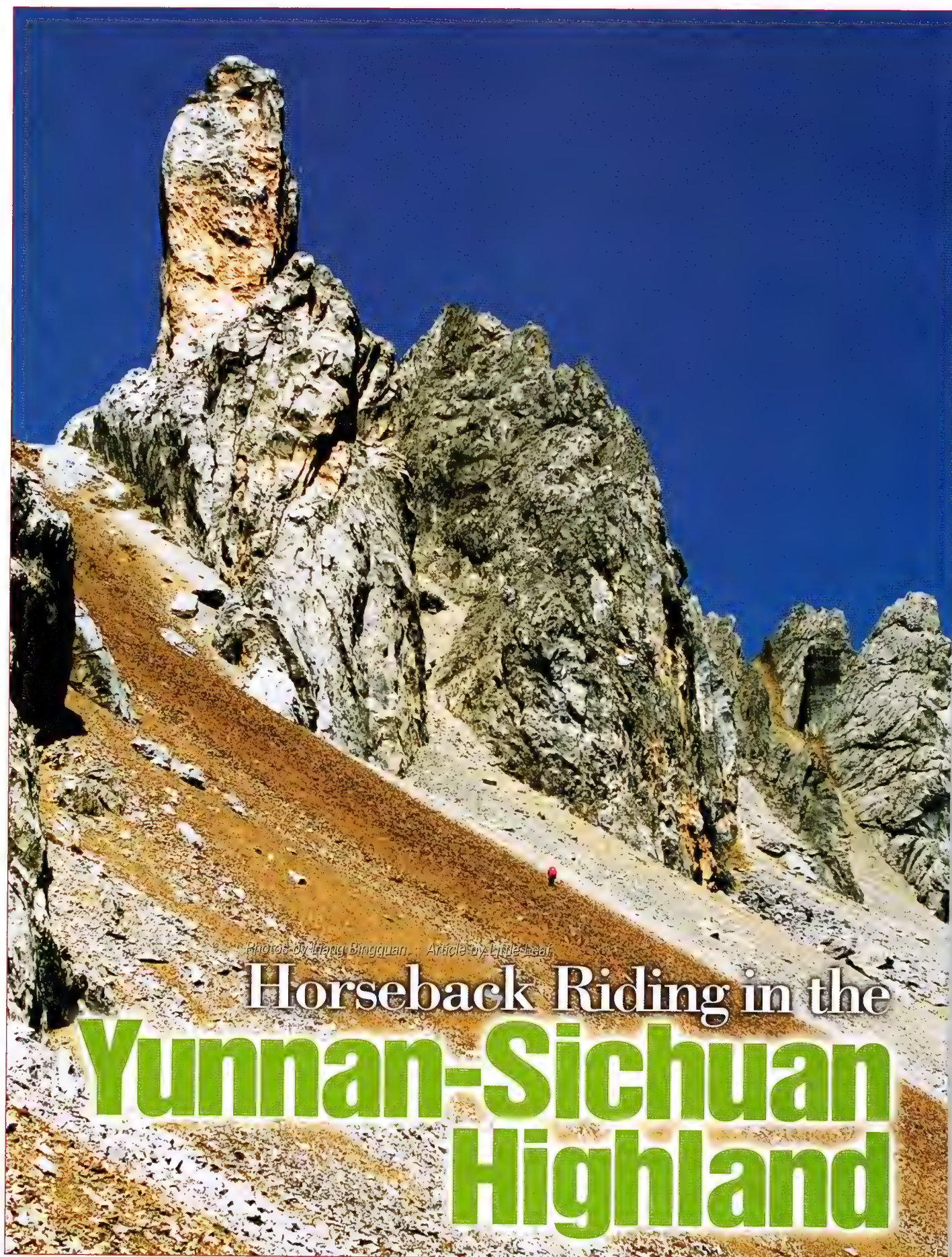
Are you happy with the factual content of *China Tourism*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## What are your suggestions for improvement?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. It provides us with invaluable feedback which will help us improve *China Tourism* magazine for you.

\*Please mail this questionnaire to our office at 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or fax to (852) 2561 8196.





*Photos by Liang Bingquan · Article by Littleleaf*

# Horseback Riding in the **Yunnan-Sichuan Highland**



**Two years ago, I had a great trip to Lijiang and Shangri-La in Yunnan Province. Then I paid another visit to Yunnan, heading for the north from Shangri-La, crossing the Jinsha River to reach Derong, Xiangcheng and Daocheng in Sichuan Province. I cherish immensely the wonderland of snow-capped mountains, the refreshing highland landscapes, the honest smiles of the Tibetans, the frightening altitude sickness, and the bumping highways linking Yunnan, Sichuan and Tibet.**

### Meeting the Tiger Once More

#### Section ① : Lijiang → Shangri-La → Tiger Leaping Gorge

One morning in October, the six of us flew from Shenzhen to Lijiang. After arriving in the afternoon, we hired a minibus to drive north to Shangri-La. In order to see the Tiger Leaping Gorge once more, we travelled an extra 100 km on a rough mountain road. Following a narrow and deep valley, we reached the Tiger Leaping Gorge. The dirt road extended between the Yulong and Haba snowy mountains, both 3,900 m above sea level. Below us, the torrential currents were hitting the huge rocks in the middle of the river, sending out high waves and deafening sound. It was a magnificent scene.

### Entering the Gorge

#### Section ② : Tiger Leaping Gorge → White Water Terrace → Derong

By dusk, we arrived at Baishutai (White Water Terrace) in Sanba Township in the southeast of Shangri-La County. Baishutai looked like fields of jade built on ladders. From the top, white water flew down, like pouring milk. Night fell all of a sudden, so we hurried back to the road, after having supper in a small restaurant.

The vehicle bumped forward in darkness. Stars twinkled in the sky, while meteors flew by occasionally. Before we realised it, we had arrived in the county seat of Shangri-La. The next morning, we rented two 4x4s and set off at noon. We passed the rivers of Wongshui,

Jinsha and Quding before entering the county seat of Derong (meaning the "land of gorges" in Tibetan). Driving further, we found nothing but barren mountains on both sides of the road.

### Befriending the Local Tibetans

#### Section ③ : Guxue Township → Xiayong Village → Sun Valley

We crossed the Victory Bridge to enter Guxue Township. Our next stop was Xiayong Village, 40 km from Derong. It took us seven hours to negotiate the winding road on the mountain, so it was not until after 8 p.m. that we reached our destination. Picking up our light luggage, we walked into the village in darkness, along the road covered with sand and rubble. We had to be very careful with every step to avoid falling down the steep slope. It was quite some time before we finally got to the village. We

1. The Zhujin Saddle on the holy mountain of Xiangazong is nicknamed "Gate to Hell".
2. Marching towards the Cirencuo (Longevity Lake)



Route Map of the Journey







chose to stay in a Tibetan family's house for the night. The local people lived without electricity. In the weak candlelight, we chatted with the host and his family. Their boldness, kindness and carefree lifestyle impressed us deeply.

### **The Brilliant Sun Valley**

In the early morning the next day, we set off for Taiyanggu (Sun Valley) on horseback, with local villagers serving as our horsemen and guides.

The Xiayong Nature Reserve occupies an area of 367 km<sup>2</sup>. Its holy Xiangazong Mountain, with a summit rising 5,545 m above sea level, is the highest peak in Derong County. The mountain range, covered in snow all year round, extends more than 10 km, creating a stunning view. We rode the horses up the mountain, following a winding trail. The forests of fir, spruce, larch, masson pine and azalea dotted

the slopes, with jagged rocks and steep cliffs in the background, forming a brilliant picture. We were admiring the charming scenery when the horsemen's beautiful song came to us. They input much spiritual liveliness to the landscapes.

The higher we climbed, the narrower the trail became. Sometimes, we had to get down from the horse and travel on foot. As the air was thin, we had to breathe deeply to make a step forward. It was not easy to reach the camp at Xin'antun, which was situated on a pasture surrounded by forests on all sides.

### **Rolling Snowy Mountains** **Section ④ : Sunny Grassland →** **Yongnicuo**

We spent the night in a cottage at the camp. Completely refreshed the next morning, we advanced towards

Yongnicuo situated 4,200 m above sea level. When we passed the Sunny Grassland, we stopped to enjoy the warm sunshine for a while before continuing the journey.

The road leading to the high mountain was covered with nothing but rubble, which made it very slippery. We could see grotesque peaks and strangely shaped rocks at a distance. We were told it was the Aer Saddle at an altitude of 4,500 m above sea level. We crossed the saddle to reach the other side of the mountain, where the scenery was totally different. All we could see were rolling snowy mountains of Baimang and Meili.

The lake of Yongnicuo, embraced in forests growing on the high mountains, had crystal clear water that reflected the blue sky and the white Prince Peak. The branches of the willows grew on its banks, standing



firmly and stretching out towards the sky. It was a wonderland.

## Losing the Horses

### Section ⑤ : Yongnicuo → Cirencuo

We spent the night in a cottage built by the lake. The chilly wind blew in from the seams between the timbers, and the bugs made it hard to sleep. When I looked out the following morning, I found there was frost on the lake surface. We were ready to go when the bad news came: all the horses were gone, probably because we did not tie them well. It was scary, as it was hard to imagine how we would travel on foot in the mountains, not to mention coping with altitude sickness. After quite a while, the horsemen, who had searched several peaks, still could not find any of the horses. They decided to go back to the Xin'antun camp to have a look. Together with another member of our team, I walked forward to ask for help, while the others waited at the site.

The road condition was very bad and the altitude made it hard to breathe. Under the scorching sun, however, we had no other choice but to climb up a slope of 60°. When I moved on gingerly, with careful steps, I felt I was crossing the gate to hell. We reached the top of the mountain finally, and now, we could see the picturesque lakes of Cirencuo (Longevity Lake), Yongjiucuo and Cuonicuo. With difficulty, we crossed the Daer Saddle to have a better view of Cuonicuo, which is also called the Black Sea. The green lake looked like a gem embedded in the mountains. Melted water from the glaciers on the Xiangazong Mountain flew into the lake. When the lake was full, water ran over the bank and splashed down the cliffs, creating a fall of several hundred metres. It was an awesome sight.

## The Horses Back

The beautiful scenery in front of me made me forget the hardships, though I still felt dizzy. When we reached Dacuonicuo, my heartbeat became very fast and my body was

shivering; I felt weak and kept vomiting. Overwhelmed by fear, my eyes were filled with tears, though I did not want to cry. My partner gave me medicine for altitude sickness and encouraged me to keep on. I calmed down, but still felt helpless when I saw the endless road in front of us. All of a sudden, I heard noises of horses coming from the opposite mountain — our horsemen had found our horses at the Xin'antun camp. The relief was overwhelming.

After a short break, we set off, despite my tiredness. Further ahead was Cirencuo, the largest lake in the area. Following the Tibetans' suit, we walked to the lakeside and touched the water with our hands to pray for

longevity. The Tibetans believe that if you drink three mouthfuls of water from the lake, you'll be safe and enjoy a long life.

## The Architecture of Songpi Temple

### Section ⑥ : Derong → Xiangcheng

The next day after we returned to the Xin'antun camp, we went down the mountain by horse along the very steep slopes. As we had been exposed in the scorching sunshine for several

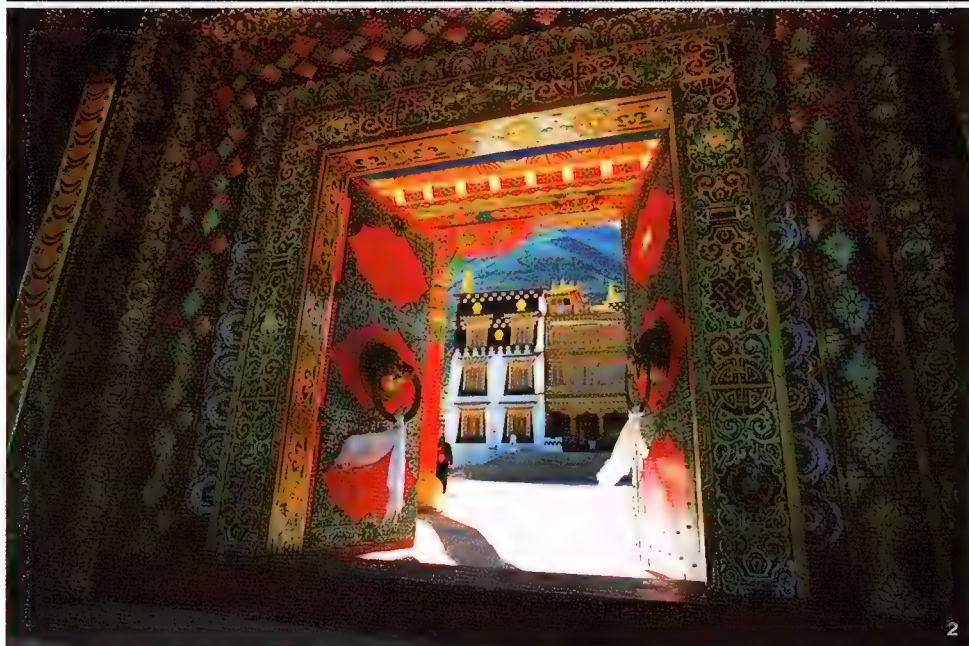
1. The Milk Lake as viewed from the Multicolour Lake at 4,500 m above sea level

2. A lovely girl in Xiayong Village, Derong

3. A bird-eye's view of the villages in Xiangcheng







days, we were tanned and our faces began to peel when we arrived at Xiayong Village.

We went to Derong by car. Before we got close, we could see Sangpi Temple standing on the middle layer of a slope outside the county seat of Xiangcheng. A subordinate of the famous Tibetan Jiadeng Monastery, it is a temple of the Gelug Sect of Tibetan Buddhism built in the Kangba area. Its buildings were gorgeously furnished, the columns, walls and ceilings all decorated with exquisitely painted

patterns. The workmanship was excellent and the colours were striking. It seemed to me that the temple was more like a gallery of fine arts. From the top of the two-storey building, we had a panoramic view of the town of Xiangcheng.

### The Golden Autumn Section 7 : Daocheng → Yading Nature Reserve

Leaving Sangpi Temple, we continued our drive towards

Daocheng, a county seat situated 3,750 m above sea level. As it was autumn, we saw golden leaved Cathay poplars everywhere in the town. Dotted with some red leaves, the scenes were as charming as landscape paintings.

We entered the Yading Nature Reserve after having lunch in Riwa Township. We hired horses at the entrance to the park and began our hiking, with my horse led by a monk with kind expressions. Seeing the huge rocks on the roadside carved with sutras, I realised the importance of religion in the local people's lives. Chonggu Temple is located at the foot of Xiannairi Mountain, at an altitude of 3,880 m above sea level. The surrounding scenery, with snow-capped mountains, glaciers and forests, was unmatched, but the temple had long become a ruin.

We stayed in a wooden shelter for the night.

### Three Snowy Holy Peaks

The following day, we went to Luorong Pasture at 4,150 m altitude and arrived after walking for over three hours on a road in the valley. The snowy peak of Yangmaiying was in front of us, and we moved to it step by step, with great respect for Mother Nature. Surrounding the Luorong Pasture are three snowy peaks, namely, Xiannairi, Yangmaiying and Xianuoduoji, which stand to form a tripod, as well as a magnificent picture. We stayed in a military tent on the pasture for a chilly night.

The following morning, we got up to see the golden reflections of the Yangmaiying Peak in the pond. Here, most tourists would turn back to Chonggu Temple. Their hired horses serve them only for the distance






more difficult, there was water from the melted snow on the mountain forming small falls in some sections of the road.

When we saw the crystal-like water of the Milk Lake, we forgot all the tough struggles. Continuing from here, our breathing became increasingly difficult

highest point on this mountain-circling route. It was quiet, and we dared not speak out loud, fearing to offend the spirits there. When we returned to the Luorong Pasture, I felt as if I were home. It was a luxury for me to warm my hands and feet in hot water.

The next day, we returned to the Chonggu camp, we took a car to Shangri-La via Daocheng and Xiangcheng, completing my dream tour. 

between the park entrance and the Luorong Pasture. Yet we continued the climb to the Milk Lake and even further to the Multicolour Lake. It took us about an hour to negotiate the rugged road from Luorong Pasture to Milk Lake. To make walking even

while the altitude kept increasing. At the saddle, we saw a vast open land, with Yangmaiying on its left and Xiannairi on its right.

We then reached the Multicolour Lake, which situated close to the snowline and the glaciers, is the

1. The holy Xianuoduoji Peak in the Yading Nature Reserve in Daocheng
2. The brilliant Sangpi Temple in Xiangcheng
3. Spending the night in a cowshed built by Lake Yongnicuo on the holy mountain of Xiangazong
4. The holy peak of Xiannairi in the Yading Nature Reserve









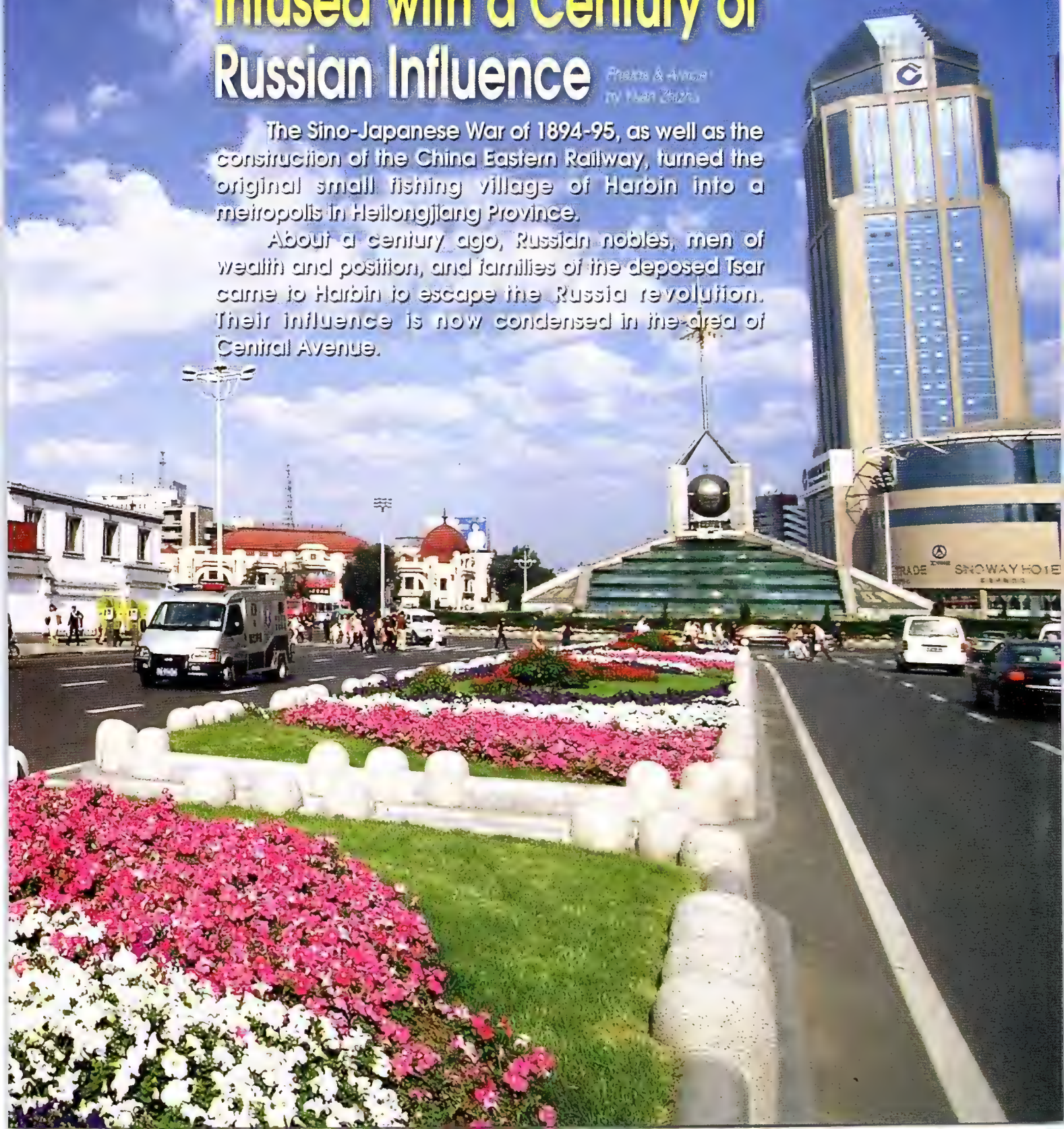
# Harbin

## Infused with a Century of Russian Influence

Photos & Video  
by Han Zhizhi

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, as well as the construction of the China Eastern Railway, turned the original small fishing village of Harbin into a metropolis in Heilongjiang Province.

About a century ago, Russian nobles, men of wealth and position, and families of the deposed Tsar came to Harbin to escape the Russia revolution. Their influence is now condensed in the area of Central Avenue.







**I**t would be difficult for the fishermen of the last century to imagine that that the strip of land they inhabited would transform into a metropolis hustling and bustling with both Chinese and Western culture.

#### ◆ Russian Classic: The Central Avenue ◆

Central Avenue has been a place I have enjoyed visiting ever since my childhood. Now, this old street with its varied European architectural styles from different historic periods is a busy commercial centre accessible only to pedestrians. Brand-name stores such as Pierre Cardin and Daphne have opened, bringing an air of modernity to this stone-paved old street.

According to Mr. Liu, originally from Shandong Province, who now runs a clothing business in Harbin, the Central Avenue used to be part of a swamp. During the construction of the China Eastern Railway, many construction workers made their temporary homes here. Later, they brought their families over and put them into makeshift huts. Early last century, many people from the surrounding area had left their poverty-stricken hometown to look for a living also settled down here. The new settlement, fairly neatly laid out according to the standard of the time, slowly took the shape of a street, then called the China Avenue. Russian merchants came to live in the street in 1909, and the land nearby became the site for the engineering bureau of the China Eastern Railway. Factories appeared along with living quarters. The influx of people and a busy life turned the place into the most well known street in the entire city of Harbin.

As more and more Russians and Europeans from

other countries moved to the street, a Russian architect designed and oversaw a project in 1924 to pave the China Avenue with 999,999 stones. The street took the name of Central Avenue in August 1928.

Eighty-four-year-old Wang Lizhen recalled that the street then was lined with more than 100 Western restaurants, bars, theatres and stores. There were businesses operated by Chinese, but they were very few. The clothes and jewellery she wore during those years were all bought on this street. Although the prosperous Nangang District, where she had her home, had large department stores such as the Qiulin and the Moscow, she and her friends still loved to go shopping on Central Avenue. When she had time, she would go and wander along the street to appreciate the elegant and romantic European buildings.





### ◆ The Grand Guesthouse ◆

In 1903, Joseph Kasper, a Jewish Frenchman, engaged a Russian architect to design a hotel that was completed on Central Avenue in 1906. The Modern Hotel, imbued with noble European style, was complete with guest rooms, Chinese and Western restaurants and a bar, and naturally it became a popular place for wealthy businessmen and the nobility living in Harbin. It was turned into a government guesthouse later, which saw the stay of the 14th Dalai Lama, Soong Ching Ling — the wife of the first president of China Sun Yat-sen, as well as many other historical figures.

### ◆ A Baroque Bookstore ◆

The Education Bookstore, housed in a brick-wood Baroque structure, was originally the site of the Matsura Store. It was another piece of typically European architecture to appear on Central Avenue after the Modern Hotel. The elegantly and meticulously executed bas-relief sculpture as well as graceful design on the pillars are the representative works of art among the several dozen European buildings on the street. After its completion in 1909, it immediately became a centre for Russian expatriates. During the Japanese occupation in Harbin, the building was turned into the Matsura Store. Eventually, it became a foreign language bookstore.

Apart from Russians, some businessmen and scholars from Poland, Britain and France also settled in Harbin. These people left an impressive legacy of architecture in the city. In 1917, a French brick-wood building appeared in the central section of the avenue—the Concorde Bank, which is now a leather goods shop and a department store.

### ◆ Saced Places in Harmony ◆

In the early 1920s, large numbers of Europeans of

different faiths, including businessmen and Russian nobles, flooded into Harbin.

They established Christian churches, Islam mosques and Eastern Orthodox churches in town. In the 1930s, there were over 60 churches, one-third of which were of the

Eastern Orthodox denomination. When the church bells sounded, believers walking on the street would halt their steps and silently pray in the direction of the churches.

The Christian church at 252 Dongdazhi Street of Nangang District has been preserved in its entirety. In fact, the church resumed its religious activities in the 1980s. This Gothic building of brick and wood was designed in 1916 by



Previous page: European buildings with a history of more than 100 years still beautify today's Harbin city.

1. The Central Avenue paved with stones
2. Behind the old Modern Hotel is the recently completed New Modern Plaza.
3. People playing cards in front of a church in the afternoon sun

## Construction of the China Eastern Railway

More than a century ago, Harbin on the bank of the Songhua River was simply a desolate fishing village where residents were mostly Manchurians (a Chinese minority group) who made a living out of fishing. They supplemented their income with farming, leading a serene life. It was the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 that changed the destiny of these fishermen.

At the end of the war, the Qing government had to sign the Treaty of Shimonoseki, ceding to Japan the Shandong Peninsular and paying 200 million taels of silver as war indemnity. The Qing government wanted to enlist an ally to fight back Japan. Russia, which was trying to expand its influence to the entire Far East region, wanted to build a railway between Manchuria and Vladivostok, so that they could transport military supplies to its Far East army and providing supplies for economic development in the area. Thus, Russia, supported by Germany and France, on one hand pressured Japan to give up the Shandong Peninsular, and on the other hand, pressured the Qing government to have the railway built. Although the Qing government was eager to cement an alliance with Russia, they

did not want accept the Russia request in haste. Finally in June 1896, the Qing government concluded a treaty with the Russians in Moscow, agreeing to the Russian request to build the 2,000-km China Eastern Railway leading to Vladivostok on the soil of Heilongjiang Province. Harbin was located at the meeting point where the China Eastern Railway and the domestic Chinese railway formed a T shape.

During the 12 years of construction of the railway from 1898 to 1910, some Russian businessmen, attracted by the ideal location of Harbin, came to the town to open up factories, breweries, trading companies and schools, turning the little-known fishing village into a small city.

After the breakout of the Russian October Revolution, large numbers of nobles and members of the Tsarist family as well as fleeing Jews flooded into Harbin, bringing the city an unprecedented prosperity. The area from the northern bank of the Majiagou River to the southern bank of the Songhua River became an area for Russian settlers. Here they built houses, villas and churches of strong Russian tradition, giving Harbin the reputation of the "Moscow in the East".



a French architect and built with donations from the China Eastern Railway Bureau and some of the foreign settlers. In the beginning, it was only reserved for foreign residents and people from the consulates; local Chinese believers were not admitted until a much later time.

The Saint Sophia Church is the only Eastern Orthodox church in Harbin that has not resumed its religious functions. The government has already made repairs and intends to turn it into an architectural art museum, preserving it as a landmark of the city. The church was originally completed in March 1907 and served as a chapel for the 4th Eastern Siberian Infantry Division of the Tsarist army. In response to the rapid increase of Eastern Orthodox disciples in Harbin, it was expanded into the largest Eastern Orthodox church of brick and wood in the Far East. The building is the harmonious combination of the Roman and Russian architectural traditions, and the State Council has listed the building as a major national cultural relic site under protection.

#### ◆ President's Chef ◆

As Russian and European settlers' population grew, the first Western restaurant, now known as the Huameixi Western Restaurant, opened on Central Avenue in 1905, to be followed by the Modern Hotel and the Champs Elysees Western Restaurant. Nowadays, there are more than a hundred Western restaurants elegantly decorated the city.



The Portman Western Restaurant stands out in particular, as the chef was once the personal cook for the current Russian President Vladimir Putin. The restaurant serves a rich combination of sweet, sour and spicy Russian cuisine.

The big bread and red sausage served in Harbin are the traditional food introduced from Russia early last century. They remain the best gifts for tourists to take home. The traditional Russian bread is exceptionally huge, 30 cm in diameter and weighing three to four kilograms. The hardwood used to bake the bread renders it a special sweetness with a light sour taste and gives it a very crispy crust.





### ◆ Nightlife and Shopping ◆

The Gregory Street here is lit up in colourful lights, permeating with a romantic air when night falls. A series of bars with their rich exotic atmosphere are often full of young people swigging drinks. The very names of the bars such as "Friday", "Moulin Rouge", "Camp David" and "St. Petersburg" give visitors a unique bar culture.

People in Harbin are all-time fashion seekers, guiding the fashion trend in China's entire northeast all year round.

For visitors from the south, items on top of their wish list are mink coats and grey fox furs. The store specialising in northeastern leather in the central section of Central Avenue



promotes nearly a thousand new varieties every early winter. Even in the heat of the summer, tourists come to make their selection by taking advantage of the relatively low seasonal prices.

The Sino-Russian trade in the late 1980s, which had been cut off for more than two decades, began to revive in the form of barter trade in the Nangang District. Almost all visitors to Harbin come to the street to purchase finely made Russian tableware or tea sets. The street, about 500 m long, is lined with some 700 shops featuring Russian merchandise, ranging from leather coats, clothes, murals,

and shavers to stainless steel table and kitchen utensils. Among the most desired items are military supplies such as telescopes, bags, and canteens.

When I went to buy military gear with some friends last spring, I found the Russian stores were less busy than before. A pure white Russian tea set was priced at only a hundred yuan. If you spend a little time there, you're sure to find some good bargains.

Translated by Fred Huang

1. Traditional Russian bread and red sausages at Qiulin Store (by Wang Feng)
2. Bars carrying Russian place names can be seen just about everywhere.
3. Tourists are regular patrons of bars in Harbin.
4. Quality northeast leather goods are coveted items for visitors to Harbin. (by Wang Feng)



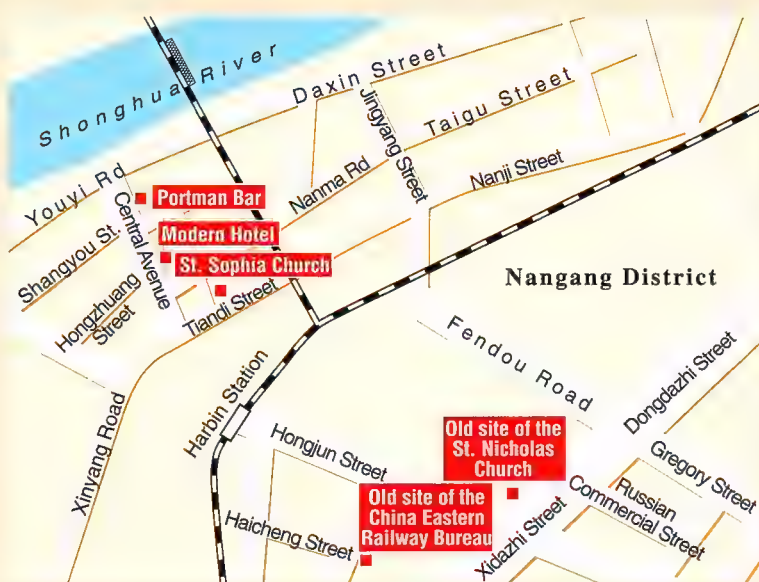
### Traveller's Tips

**Air transport:** Everyday, regular flights connect Harbin with major Chinese cities and Hong Kong (via Beijing and Shanghai), Korea, Japan and Russia.

To go to Harbin from Beijing, one can also take the Z15/16 express train that leaves Beijing Railway Station at 8:30 a.m. to arrive in Harbin at 7:10 next morning. The fare for a soft sleeper seat is 429 yuan (US\$ 1~8 yuan).

**Inner city travel:** Harbin is served by a network of public buses and the fare is one yuan. Taxis are very convenient for visiting tourist attractions in the city and the rate is 1.2 to 1.6 yuan per kilometre. The price for hiring a car in the Songhua River Scenic Area in Harbin is no more than 29 yuan.

**Accommodation:** The Gloria Hotel in the Songhua River Scenic Area, the Modern Hotel on the Central Avenue and the Nationality Hotel on Youyi Road are convenient places to stay in order to see the scenic attractions. The Tianzhu, Beixiu, Huayuncun, Lantian and Huarong hotels in Nangang District are also good. In summer, the rates are 150-300 yuan for a standard guest room and 350-450 yuan for a deluxe room. From October to December, the rate is cut by half.





# MORDAGA

## A Hunting Ground of Genghis Khan

*Photos & Article by  
Liu Zhaoming, Huang Yanhong*

Travelling northwards along the rolling Greater Hinggan Mountains, we finally arrived at the top of the “cockscornb” of China — Mordaga of Inner Mongolia, the largest forest park in the country.



**F**acing Russia across the Ergun River, Mordaga is the most typical and most intact virgin coniferous forest in the temperate zone in today's China. With an area of 578,000 ha, it is the country's largest national forest park in the cool temperate zone and a rare gene pool of wildlife.

### Mordaga — “Setting off on Horseback”

There are several beliefs about the origin of the name “Mordaga”. Some people say it is a word from the Oroqen ethnic group meaning “a place with white birches”, while some say it stems from the Ewenki ethnic group meaning “a place with verdant waters”. But most believe it is Mongolian, and it means “setting off on horseback”.

According to legend, Mordaga was a hunting ground of Genghis Khan, the man who conquered most of Eurasia and set up the Mongol Empire. A stele inscription reveals that Genghis Khan returned to Shiwei to worship



earth's crust here was thickened, the sea gradually faded away and the land emerged. During the Quaternary Period, the temperature dropped sharply. The rainfall and cold air gradually formed round hills and wide river valleys.

We settled down in the Longyan Villa. The first destination was Mount Longyan. The hill is famous for the fog that lingers every morning, and the scenery attracts many photographers. We set off at 7 a.m. and took a taxi halfway up the hill, then walked to the top. When the morning sun shone over the fog sea, I was surprised to see my shadow in a huge ring of colourful light in the sky — the rare and famous Longyan Buddha's Halo.

There are many hills in Mordaga. Some are nearly 1,000 m high, like Niu'er, Xiaojian,



ancestors and go hunting in 1207. The next day, a group of 500 riders followed him to the forest for hunting. When they climbed to the top of Longyan Mountain at dusk, he shot down a big black bird with an arrow. As he was having a rest, he was greatly inspired and roared, “Mordaga!”

Walking in Mordaga is like reading a book about the history of nature. Because of the mountains (Haixi and Yanshan) movement in the Paleozoic Era and the Mesozoic Era, the

1. The misty, ribbon-like dawn fog endows Mordaga with poetic beauty.
2. Nurseries were set up to grow young larches for the sustainable future of forest.
3. Dense woods are one of the most important natural resources in Mordaga.
4. Zigzagging rivers are the root of life in Mordaga.





Wanghuolou northern peak, Alijima and Daxintun northern peak. I climbed Xiaojian at 3 a.m. one day with friends. Dubbed the “mainstay” of Mordaga, the 988-m Xiaojian is the highest peak here. With the Daheishan (big black hill) in the front and Sandaogou (three valleys) at the back, it stands along the Beirci River in the east and faces Russia in the north.

Another hill called Niu'er looks strong and tall, where the Ergun River is twisted, looking like many question marks.



### Lush Forest



The biggest attraction of Mordaga is the forest. Here, plants of the same species grow together. Therefore, people divide the forest into different scenic spots, like zhangzisong (a variety of European red pine) virgin woods, larch virgin woods and white birch virgin woods. There are also spots of other species such as the Red Bean Slope, black birch woods, second growth forest and wetlands.

Mordaga is not only a kingdom of wild plants but also a paradise for wild animals. So far, 332 vertebrates and 227 species of birds have been listed. We came across some yellow weasels, river deer and roe deer, which ran away after examining us for a while.

There is a “hunters path” in the resort, which is said to be the place where the Ewenki ancestors from Russia hunted in the early days. It is dreadful walking on the path through the dense and dark forest, where bears used to be common.



### “The Moon Fell into the Lake”



Mordaga is endowed with many rivers criss-crossing the area. Seen from the peaks, the Beirci River is like a 250-km-long blue ribbon. Pretty hills and trees are reflected on the verdant Ajima River. The Shuimogou River is dubbed the most winding river in the forest, which twists nine turns in only 100 m.

I sat down by the Shuimogou River and fished with a wooden stick, using a piece of sausage as bait. In only half an hour I got 30 fish. We dealt with them in a local way—making some into sauce and braising others with river water—it was really a feast.

The most beautiful river is the Jiliu River, which dances like a blue ribbon and varies her image from gentle to wild.

The local tourist department has begun organising the boat tour. Tourists can enjoy the scene while drifting down on the current. A holiday village called Bailudao (white deer island) has been built, where mountains and rivers







surround a group of Gothic-styled buildings. There is a splendid turning of the Jiliu River in front of the village, which is the best scene for photographers and is believed to be the most beautiful sight in the forest. An island in the middle of the river is called Xiangsi Island, which means "to pine with love". Not far from the island is Moon Lake, which was named not by scholars but by road construction workers. It is said that they found a huge silver plate at the foot of the hill while they were working at night. They believed it was the moon fallen into the lake, hence the name Moon Lake.



### The Russian Village of Taipingchuan

There is a centuries-old village called Taipingchuan in the forest area of Mordaga, where the wooden architecture is all typical Russian style with beautiful surroundings, like a Russian drawing.

Taipingchuan is a place of mixed descendants of Chinese and Russian heritage. Today, most of their descendants are working in local forestry departments.

It was already dusk when we left Taipingchuan for Jilalin, from where we would go to the cities of Heishantou, Manzhouli and Hailar in Inner Mongolia. On our way we met the Ergun River many times. Golden sunshine was flickering through the clouds, promising a clear sunny day.

*Translated by Li Xing*

1. The vast wood storage ground in the Greater Hinggan Mountains
2. Pine trees and azaleas
3. It's hard to believe there was once a sea here 600 million years ago.

## Travel Tips:

### Transportation

- **Route 1:** Take a plane from Beijing to Hailar of Inner Mongolia. There are five flights every week. Then take a five-hour bus trip from Hailar to Mordaga via Ergun City and Sanhe Town and enjoy the Barag Grassland on the way. Visitors can also take a train from Hailar to Mordaga in nine hours. A hard-berth ticket costs 70 yuan (US \$8.50).

- **Route 2:** Take a train from Harbin of Heilongjiang Province to Yitulihe of Yakeshi City in Inner Mongolia, a trip of 17 hours. A hard-berth ticket costs 160 yuan (US \$19.50). Then switch to another train for a four-hour ride to Mordaga, which costs eight yuan (US \$1).



### Accommodation

Mordaga is a small town with less than 30,000 residents. Hotels in town include Longyan Villa, Shanquan Hotel, the holiday village in the primeval forest and several private inns, all of which have standard rooms charging 60 to 160 yuan (US \$7.30 - \$20). Tourists can rent tents in the forest or by the rivers, which costs 30 to 50 yuan (US \$3.70 - \$6) each.

### Food

Mordaga is located in the forest area, but has cuisines of the Han, Mongolian, Korean, Ewenki, Oroqen and Russian. The most characteristic cuisine includes traditional boiled mutton, rabbit braised with potatoes, chicken braised with mushrooms, roast lamb, dumplings with wild plant fillings and fish.

### Shopping

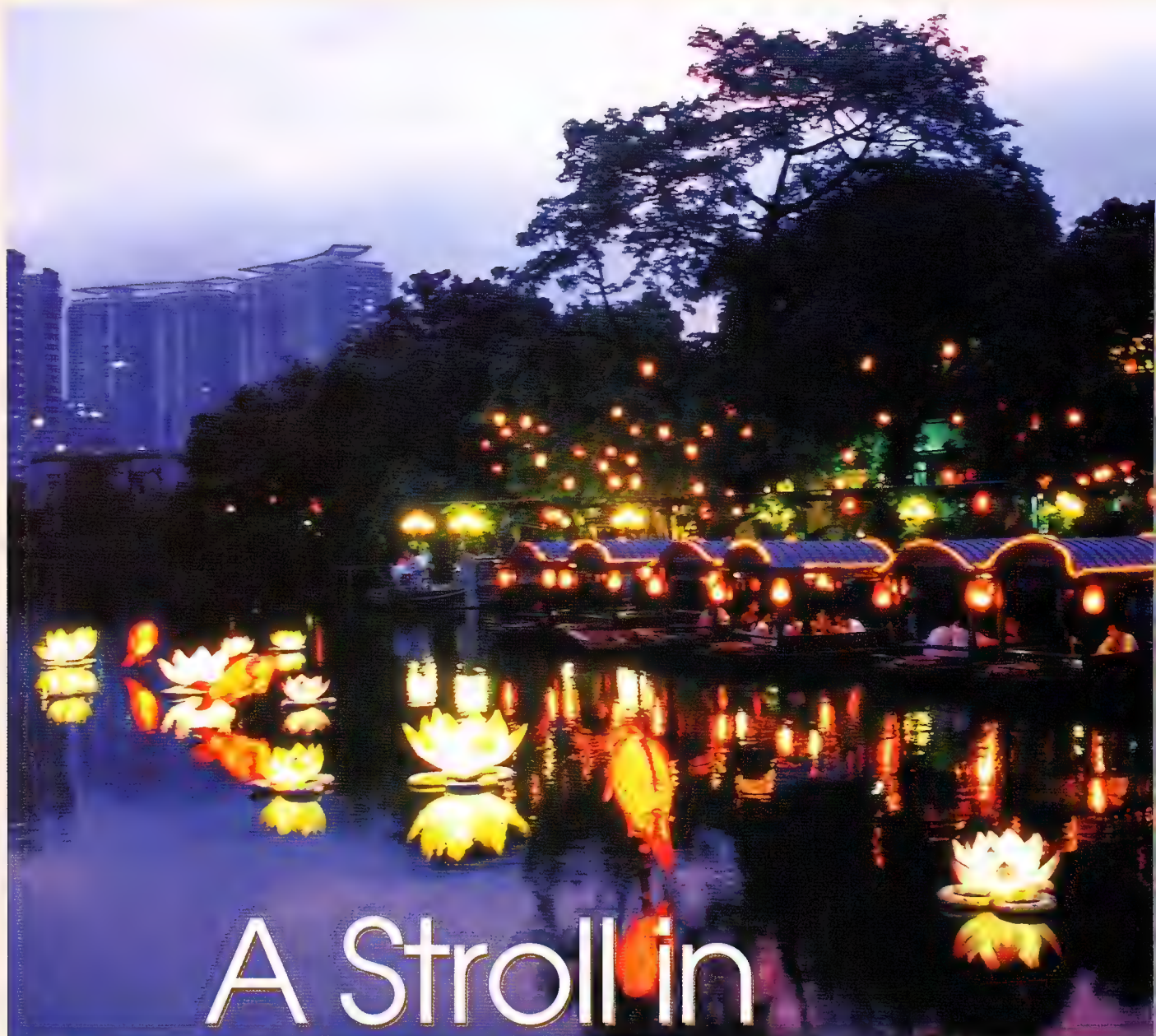
Many souvenirs and local products in Mordaga can be bought as gifts for friends, like wooden pens, wooden clocks, wooden fruit plates, wooden drawings and white birch bark drawings. Local products include pine nuts, lily flowers, red beans, mushrooms and edible fungus.

### Major Tourist Spots

Mount Longyan, Cuiran Park, Zhangzisong woods, Jiliu River, Bailudao Holiday Village, Xiangsi Island, Red Bean Slope, hunting ground and the Chinese-Russian co-existence village.







# A Stroll in

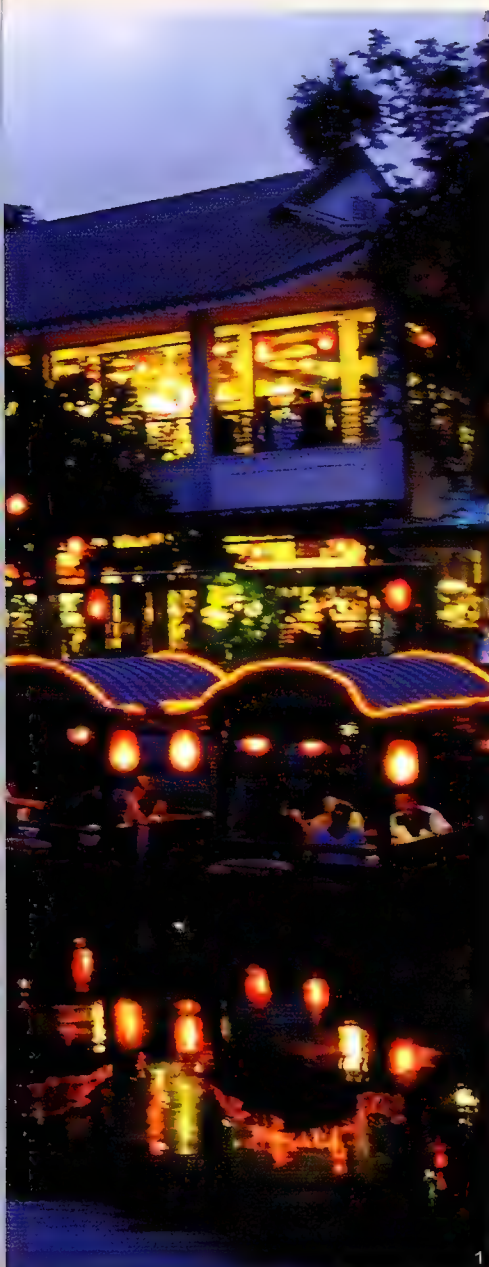
# Xiguan

*Photos and Article by Zhu Ping*



A trip to Guangzhou City is simply not complete without a visit to Xiguan. Historically, Xiguan was an important port that connected the waterways of Guangzhou with the outside world. With prosperity and booming trade, came a collection of people from all walks of life, hence making Xiguan the intriguing place it is today.





built of brick and timber, with a layout consisting of various halls, rooms and courtyards.

The grey bricks were transported from Dongguan City, and the bricklayers used glutinous rice and mortar to cement, so the finish is perfectly smooth and

seamless. The Manchu-style windows

former residences of tycoons and magnates, and these historical mansions include: No. 8 Fengyuan Road, No. 84 Fengyuan Road, No.18 Baoyuan Road, and the Petit Painted Gallery on Sanmian Dajie (boulevard).

I got to No. 8 Fengyuan Road and saw a plaque describing it as a heritage home, but judging by the washing hung out to dry, the private residence is not open to the public. I backtracked a few steps and saw another house displaying the "Guangzhou Cultural Heritage" sign, with a "Petit Painted Gallery" inscription. A woman at the door said I was free to go in but it had been turned into a factory and was hardly worth looking at. To see a real Xiguan mansion, she said I was better off going to the Liwan Museum.

Liwan museum is at No. 84 Fengyuan Road and it provides a glimpse of what a Xiguan mansion looked like in its heyday. The original style of the building has been immaculately restored. Xiguan mansions are

1. Boats on Liwan lake. In the old days, Xiguan attracted hordes of visitors who came for boating fun and culinary delights on the water.
2. Life in the alleyways can seem cluttered—but the living is laid-back.
3. The intricately crafted Manchu-windows
4. Liwan museum is set in a traditional Xiguan mansion that showcases the best of Lingnan architecture. (by Chan Yat Nin)

**X**iguan is the colloquial name for what is known today as the Liwan district of Guangzhou City, Guangdong Province. Located on the banks of the Bai'e Tan (pond of white swans) in the Pearl River Delta to the west of Guangzhou, the old district is separated into upper and lower Xiguan. The area from Diyijin to Taiping Men is called Upper Xiguan, while Lower Xiguan comprises the stretch from west of Guangfuzhong Road to Huangsha and Huagui Road.

### The Mansions of Xiguan

Xiguan is well-known for the







are another highlight; not only is there a myriad of styles, but the carving is exquisite—the frames are carved with all sorts of auspicious Chinese characters and designs.

Also worth noting are the unique tanglong doors. Before the 1940s, tanglong doors were used by almost all Cantonese homes, as well as the grand mansions. They weigh over 50 kg and are more than three metres high, and around 30 cm thick. Ornaments adorn the main door, such as brass or iron rings, door gods or the symbol for happiness.

To make an entire set of tanglong doors takes more than 10 days from start to finish. The doors are made without using a single nail—all the joins are hand-made, entailing

supreme attention to detail and impeccable craftsmanship.

The old folks say these Xiguan Mansions are supremely comfortable to live in, built to suit the weather conditions. They are cool in summer and warm in winter. Unfortunately, while once there were over 800 mansions in Guangzhou, now only about 100 remain.

### **Qilou Streets—Built for Living**

In addition to the mansions, Xiguan's Qilous—like Singapore's shophouses or mediterranean style Sotto Portico buildings—hold an appearance all of their own. These structures evolved out of Guangzhou's development into a commercial hub and the city's sub-tropical weather conditions. Mainly built on the sides of roads and on pavements in front of

buildings, Qilous have pillars supporting a number of structures. Most Qilous are two to four storeys high, with residences upstairs and stores downstairs, the interlinked buildings form a long corridor that shields pedestrians from the sun and rain. During the day, it offers easy access to the shops. At night, the passageways are the gathering places for tea and conversation, epitomising the “built for living” philosophy.

### **Birthplace of Herbal Tea**

It's a little known fact that Xiguan is also the birthplace of Herbal Tea.

The inventor of Herbal Tea was a herbalist named Wang Laoji. He learnt from experienced monks and gathered his own herbs from Baiyun Mountain

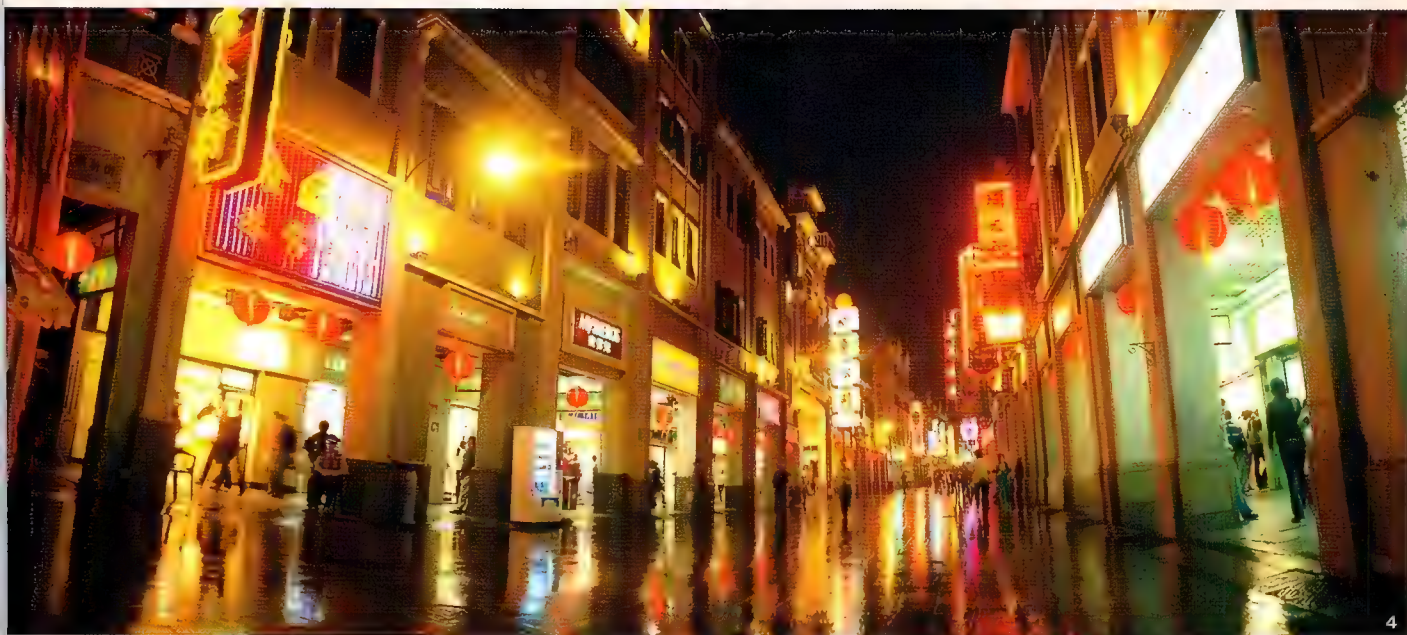


every year. One year, the eminent Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu was suffering from stress and sunstroke, while everyone fretted, an official suggested Wang Laoji's services. Amazingly enough, one serving of the tea was all it took to relieve Lin. From then on, the name of Wang Laoji Herbal Tea spread far and wide, gaining popularity even in southeast Asia. After evolving for a century, there is now a plethora of brands and types of herbal tea.

I found a herbal tea shop called Yueqing Tang (Hall of Joyful Celebration) in the alleys near Baohua Road in Xiguan. It is a perfectly preserved traditional house. The owner Liang Shixiong told me that he was the third-generation shopkeeper.







## Speckle-stone Alleys

Speckle-stone alleys are an integral part of old Guangzhou, you can find them not only in the city, but also in the villages. The flourishing economy in Xiguan meant an explosion in population, which in turn led to soaring property prices. The entire lanes are around 200-300 m long and paved with long slabs of speckled stone, all of them interconnecting to form a massive street district. After

over a century of rain and shine, the now smooth stone slabs bear witness to the changing times. These days, the well-kept lanes include the Yixiang on Longjin Road, Yaohua Dajie near Duobao Road, the historical district near Hualin Temple, etc.

Here local snacks reign supreme, attracting die-hard foodies from afar. In my meanderings, I'm often tempted by the wafting fragrance of spicy barbecue innards. On the more exotic

side, water beetles and osmanthus cicadas are the favourite taste for Xiguan natives. The osmanthus cicadas are golden brown and look no different than normal cicadas. Yet after frying, they make tasty treats. Osmanthus cicadas, like the name suggests, release a sweet scent like that of the osmanthus flower. Sadly, these snacks are vanishing in the city, soon they may only appear in restaurants, but the flavour will invariably be lost in the transition from street food to posh food.

Within the labyrinth like alleyways, time comes to a standstill and a slower and gentler face of Guangzhou is revealed — where you can still see bare chested men catching the breeze and smoking their bamboo pipes, hear Cantonese music and opera playing in the old style houses, and savour the local delicacies with their complex medley of sweet and spicy flavours.

*Translated by Cheng Lei*



1. In the old days, olives hawkers made bright red and green cockerels from paper and bamboo to attract attention. They can still be found around Shangxiajiu Road.
2. The traditional tanglong doors of Xiguan families are disappearing.
3. Traditional arts that have disappeared from modern cities are quietly thriving in the alleys of Xiguan.
4. Shangxiajiu Road is now a thriving commercial hub.



# Macau Grand Prix

## The Return of a Spectacular Event

Photos & Article by Macau Government Tourism Office

The Grand Prix is the annual grand occasion of Macau. This year, the MSAR Government will hold a special three-week party "Motorsport Festival — Grand Prix Carnival" for the motorsport fans.

**T**he 51st Grand Prix is an international event which draws attention worldwide. The three-week carnival — "Motorsport Festival: Grand Prix Carnival" — in late October will be packed with world-class sporting and cultural activities.

Kicking off the event will be the Asian Motorcross Championships on October 30th and 31st, followed by the Asian Karting Championships on November 13th and 14th, with top young drivers vying for victory. The climax will be the Grand Prix itself

from November 18th to 21st.

The Macau Grand Prix first started in 1945, and at that time it was only an amateur race for local motorcycle enthusiasts.

The local race has now evolved into an international event which attracts every world-class driver. It is the world's only street circuit racing that combines touring car racing with motorbike races at the same venue.

Ayrton Senna was the winner in the first run of the Formula 3 race in 1983, and it enhanced Macau's status



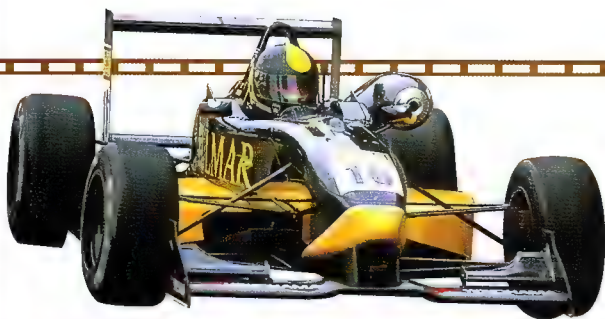
in the international motor racing.

The famous Guia Race is confirmed as the final round of the new FIA World Touring Car Championship (FIAWTCC) next year; it will be another major event for the Macau Grand Prix.

For further details of the Macau Grand Prix, please visit the website at [www.macau.grandprix.gov.mo](http://www.macau.grandprix.gov.mo)







## Grand Prix Programme

### November 18th (Thursday)

06:00	Circuit Closed
06:30	07:00 Circuit Inspection
07:30	08:20 Motorcycle Grand Prix - Practice
08:40	09:10 MGTO Cup - Practice
09:25	09:55 Hotel Fortuna Trophy - Practice
10:10	10:40 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Practice
10:55	11:25 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - Practice
11:40	12:10 Asian Formula Renault Challenge - Practice
12:25	12:55 Macau Cup / Asian Touring Car - Practice
13:10	13:55 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Qualifying
14:10	14:55 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - Qualifying
15:10	15:40 Porsche Infineon Carrera Cup Asia - Practice
16:05	16:50 Motorcycle Grand Prix - Qualifying
18:30	**Circuit Opened

### November 20th (Saturday)

06:00	Circuit Closed
06:30	07:00 Circuit Inspection
07:30	08:00 Motorcycle Grand Prix - Warm Up
08:10	08:40 2nd MGPC Scooter Cup - Timed Practice
09:00	09:10 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Warm Up
09:40	10:30 MGTO Cup - 10 Laps
11:00	11:50 Hotel Fortuna Trophy - 10 Laps
12:20	13:30 Macau Cup / Asian Touring Car - 15 Laps
14:00	14:50 51st Macau Grand Prix Formula 3 Qualification Race - 10 Laps
15:15	16:15 38th Motorcycle Grand Prix - 15 Laps
16:30	17:00 2nd MDPC Scooter Cup - 5 Laps
18:30	**Circuit Opened

### November 19th (Friday)

06:00	Circuit Closed
06:30	07:00 Circuit Inspection
07:30	08:30 Motorcycle Grand Prix - Qualifying
09:00	09:30 Hotel Fortuna Trophy - Qualifying
09:50	10:20 MGTO Cup - Qualifying
10:40	11:10 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Practice
11:30	12:00 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - Practice
12:20	12:50 Asian Formula Renault Challenge - Qualifying
13:10	13:40 Macau Cup / Asian Touring Car - Qualifying
14:00	14:45 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Qualifying
15:05	15:50 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - Qualifying
16:10	16:40 Porsche Infineon Carrera Cup Asia - Qualifying
18:30	**Circuit Opened

### November 21st (Sunday)

06:00	Circuit Closed
06:30	07:00 Circuit Inspection
07:45	08:05 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - Warm Up
08:15	08:35 Formula 3 Grand Prix - Warm Up
09:05	09:55 Asian Formula Renault Challenge - 10 Laps
10:25	11:15 Porsche Infineon Carrera Cup Asia - 10 Laps
11:45	13:45 Guia Race / Worldwide Touring Car - 2 Legs of 8 Laps (each with 15 minutes break between legs)
14:00	15:00 Special Event
15:15	15:30 Lion Dance
15:45	16:45 51st Macau Grand Prix Formula 3 (FIA Intercontinental Cup) - 15 Laps
18:30	**Circuit Opened

\* Organiser reserves the right to re-schedule the program without prior notice.

\*\* Announcement will be made if the circuit opens before the programmed time.

## Ticket

Location	18/11	19/11	20/11	21/11	20&21/11 (Package)
Grand Stand (A)	US\$ 2.50	US\$ 2.50	US\$ 50.00	US\$ 50.00	US\$ 87.50
Grand Stand (B)	US\$ 2.50	US\$ 2.50	US\$ 62.50	US\$ 62.50	—
*Marked Seat	US\$ 3.75	US\$ 3.75	US\$ 75.00	US\$ 75.00	—
Lisboa Stand	Free	Free	US\$ 25.00	US\$ 25.00	US\$ 37.50
Reservoir Stand (A)	Free	Free	US\$ 18.75	US\$ 18.75	US\$ 31.25
**With Chairs	Free	Free	US\$ 12.50	US\$ 12.50	US\$ 17.50
Reservoir Stand (B)	Free	Free	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 15.00
Reservoir Stand (A)	Free	Free	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 15.00
** With Chairs (children under 12 or student card holders)	Free	Free	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 15.00
Reservoir Stand (B)	Free	Free	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 15.00
(children under 12 or student card holders)	Free	Free	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 10.00	US\$ 15.00





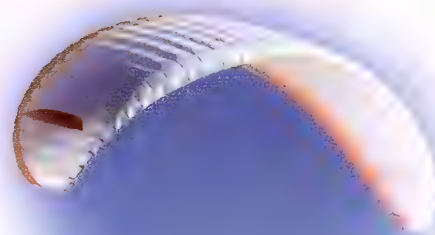
# Searching for the Lost City of Ancient Qiemo

Photos & Article by  
Dr. Christoph Baumer

Sino-Swiss Taklimakan Expedition 2003



This story is about the 2000-year-old city that has been slumbering in the Taklimakan Desert and the Chinese-Swiss expedition who tried to discover it.





## The Riddle-like Ancient Qiemo

The ancient Chinese annals describe many cities along the former Silk Road within the territory of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Most ruins have been discovered but one: the ancient city of Qiemo.

Qiemo originally belonged to the kingdom of Shanshan (also known as Loulan), which had been a vassal of the Mongolian tribe. It had about 1,600 citizens and 320 soldiers. When China launched an attack on Shanshan around 443 AD, the king of Shanshan fled to Qiemo, where it then became the last capital of Shanshan. About fifty years later, the kingdom of Tuyuhun took over Qiemo.

It was the famous Buddhist monk Xuanzang who made the last record of this ancient city. On his return from his pilgrimage to India in 643, he mentioned about the crumbling city walls of the abandoned Qiemo.

In 659, a Chinese garrison was stationed at Qiemo, and consequently renamed the city to Po Xien in 674. Six centuries later, Marco Polo mentioned a city named Qarqan, where it lied at the present Qiemo. The puzzling question is that no one knows if these two cities are in fact identical to the ancient Qiemo.

While some European explorers believe that ancient Qiemo was located near the present city, several Chinese archaeologists remain sceptical. They argue that the current riverbed of Qarqan He, which flows next to the present Qiemo, is only a few centuries old. Therefore, they propose that ancient Qiemo must be located at another place, where it is close to a different and older

riverbed of Qarqan He. This theory is plausible since all rivers flowing into the Taklimakan Desert have changed their beds several times within the last two millennia.

There were three failed attempts to search for ancient Qiemo carried by the Chinese expedition team between 1978 and 1996, and we, the Swiss team, joined force on the fourth attempt in 2003.

## The Grand Scheme

The riddle of ancient Qiemo was already imprinted on my mind during my first two Taklimakan Expeditions in 1994 and 1998. To unveil ancient Qiemo, one has to first find the ancient bed of the Qarqan He existed during the first five centuries AD. Therefore I purchased a satellite picture covering an area from 85° to 87° longitude and from 38° to 40° latitude, which showed several old riverbeds. When I discussed the project with Professor Idriss Abduressul, director of the Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology, and Liu Guorui, they were enthusiastic and spotted several search targets on the satellite picture. Having received the official permission from the Xinjiang

Cultural Relics Bureau, we decided to plan the expedition for the fall of 2003.

We first had to deal with the problem of transportation. The expedition consisted of about ten persons

staying at least one month in the desert. Aware of sand dunes that could be as high as 100 m in the eastern part of the desert, my Chinese colleagues suggested camels. But Idriss turned down the idea, "To have enough camels that can



1. The expedition team (left to right): Wang Lun, Therese Weber, Prof. Idriss, cook Zang, Dr. C. Baumer, J.D. Carrard, driver Li, W. Reichen, Prof. Wang Tao, driver Sheng, driver Liu, W. Ewig, Liu Guorui.
2. Willi Ewig flew with the expedition flag.
3. Christoph Baumer gave Willi Ewig last instructions before the take-off.
4. The three trucks entering the desert





carry enough water, we will need at least 80 camels and 20 camel men. Worse yet, the days in November will be short and we will spend half of the day time just loading and unloading camels." Therefore, we rented three Shato (meaning "desert camel") trucks from an oil company in Korla instead. These trucks are four-wheeled monsters weighing 7 tn; their tyres are 150 cm high and 100 cm wide. Given the size of the tyres and the power of the 16 L engine, they are the best desert vehicles worldwide.

### A Sea of Hope

On November 8 of 2003, our team arrived in Urumqi. Here we met Wang Lun, who was responsible for the organisation of the expedition, as well as both archaeologists Idriss and Guorui. After a two-day drive we first crossed the Tianshan Mountains to Korla, and then the Taklimakan on the Desert Highway.

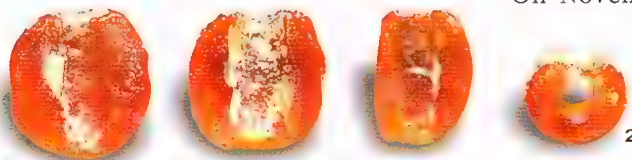
The 400-km highway cuts through the sand dunes from Korla to Minfeng in a straight line. To add protection from the advancing sand, the highway has reed stuck on both sides into the ground. In addition, there are tamarisk bushes

planted and irrigated by a thin pipe of dozens of kilometres long. The oil wells of Tazhong lie in the very heart of the Taklimakan desert, and the burned off gas on top of the derricks glows mysteriously in the night. Thanks to these oil wells, the Taklimakan Desert has changed from a sea of death to a sea of hope.

### The Mummies of Zaghunluk

On November 14, we scouted the two archaeological sites of Lalulik and Neleke that were a few kilometres southwest of the present Qiemo City.

Both sites are located near the ancient riverbeds, but there were no sight of ancient buildings, only pottery shards of various age scattered on the ground. Moreover, the few crumbled clay walls at Neleke didn't look very old either. During the previous survey in 1989, neither coins nor Buddhist relics were found, which implied the absence of ancient Qiemo. As Professor Wang Tao from London observed, "Since we know the Chinese General Li Guang donated two Buddha statues to ancient Qiemo in 384 AD, the authentic ancient





site of Qiemo must have Buddhist temples."

The huge graveyard of Zaghunluk is located at two kilometres north of Lalulik, where there were more than 1,000 tombs discovered between 1985 and 1999. Some of them are family tombs, such as the Grave 19 where a small museum was built. Through the glass roof, we saw 14 mummies and the corpses of a sacrificial horse and two goats. Most of the tombs are dated from the 12th to 7th centuries BC, and most mummies are Caucasians, similar to some old graveyards of Shanshan.

### Into the Desert

We loaded the trucks with 4000-L diesel gas, 2400 L of water, 100 kg of frozen sheep meat, 50 kg of apples, 35 melons, 400 eggs, 800 round flat bread loafs, 300 tins of beer plus vegetables, rice and noodles. Then we drove on the November 16 northwards and entered the desert at the oil camp of Tatrang.

A mere 15 km into the desert, we started to see nothing but hundreds of dead poplar trees of many centuries old, either standing or lying on the ground. These huge branches are very light since the wood is totally dry. This was the place where we had planned to spend the next few weeks.

Idriss, Guorui and I have identified five tiny rectangular target spots (dried up riverbeds) on the satellite picture. They looked darker than their surroundings. Since it was time consuming to search on foot for a specific place just based on a satellite picture, we used a motorised hang glider. Our pilot was Willi Ewig from Germany and he had

which allowed us to participate with him interactively. We felt a bit jealous that we couldn't fly through the desert like him though. Unfortunately, our first target, located 55 km inside the desert, was a flop.

### Fortune Signs

Yet, Professor Idriss identified two structures, which looked like the basis of the Buddhist pagodas, located seven kilometres away to the west on one of the digital pictures. We then drove towards them on November 18 until a 50 m high dune stopped us. At our new camp, Idriss noticed the three dead trees that had been chopped off a long time ago. It reminded him of a similar tree he



saw just before discovering an ancient site in the central part of the Taklimakan in 1994. Maybe these were the lucky signs.

The next day, one team searched for the two structures while two others scouted the area around the cut trees. But the day brought only disappointments: what we guessed might be the foundations of pagodas turned out to be conical heaps of sand naturally built around tamarisks, and the neighbourhood of the cut trees yielded no man-made structures either.

We now moved camp every day so that Willi could search from the air for the other four target points. None of these flights was successful, and the targets turned up to be mere concentrations of reed and tamarisks within small valleys where the subterranean water level was close. We had to change our strategy and concentrated on systematically scouting the edges of old riverbeds.

to choose the right moment for flying since strong winds could be detrimental due to limited gas and flying speed (33 km/h).

The flying altitude was between 20 and 1000 m above ground; the engine and propeller weighed about 21 kg and the petrol 13 kg. Willi oriented himself in the air with a GPS device and transmitted the digital pictures he shot,

1. The expedition's camp (aerial photo)
2. The beads from an ancient collar
3. Willi Ewig, Wang Tao, Idriss Abduressul and Christoph Baumer studied the satellite picture.
4. Many centuries-old dead trees





Our clue was based on the ancient text from the 5th century. The text stated that "the Anuta River (Qarqan He) flows northward and passes to the west of the walled town of Qiemo", which pointed us to the east side of the ancient riverbeds.

### Freeze Attack

During the next nine days, we carefully surveyed the eastern edge of an ancient riverbed, which was clearly visible on the satellite picture. In the meantime, the temperature had dropped down to as low as  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  at night. When it was cloudy, the weather remained below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  during daytime. Everything froze, from water and beer to bread loaf and apple, and it had to be thawed over a fire. Some of the dunes we had to cross towered up to 100 m above ground, which made our progress extremely difficult. We only covered 4.8 km on such a tiresome day! But in spite of all challenges, everybody remained cheerful and performed with utmost competence. Although several members of the expedition didn't know each other prior to the expedition, we cooperated like an experienced professional soccer team.


Several times we believed to have found the path to success. We identified an old road with dead trees lined on both sides, where we found two beads of an ancient collar made out of yellow agate or amber in the surrounding area. A traveller must have lost them here at least a millennium ago. Then we again saw several old tree cuts. On November 28, Idriss discovered an Upper Neolithic flint blade and a rough piece of flint at the foot of a huge dune. The two finds were five to six thousand years old and suggested that hunters were roaming in this once fertile region. It was the first time artefacts of the Upper Neolithic were found in this part of the Taklimakan. But these flints were three to five thousands year older than ancient Qiemo and didn't help our search. Regrettably, we found neither pottery shards nor man-made constructions along this ancient riverbed again.

We had to decide whether we were to continue searching for more Neolithic objects or to move to another ancient riverbed on December 3. We finally stuck to our original project. After driving 40 km westwards, we drove 10 km

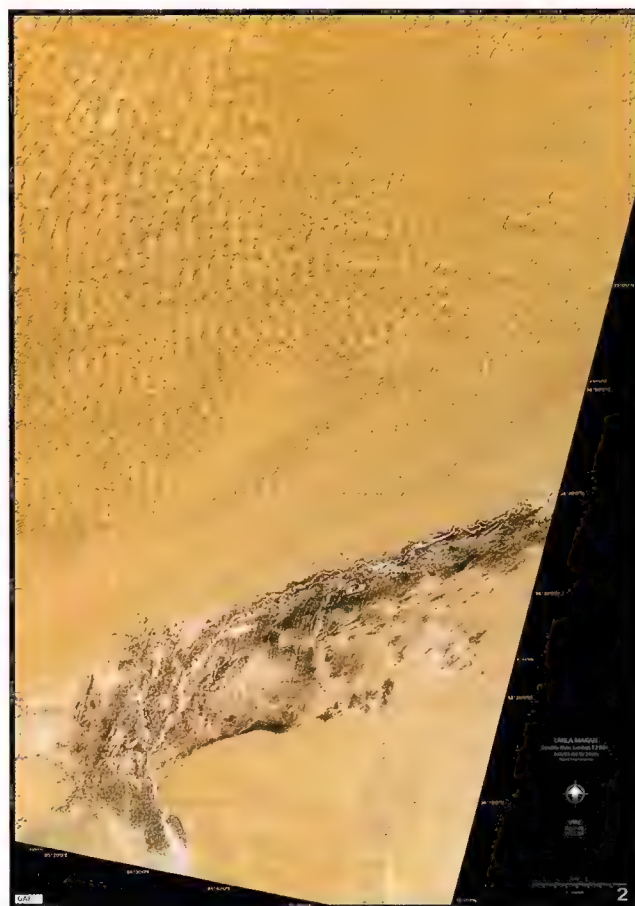
to the north on the next day. It was hardly possible to recognise the ancient riverbed since the 10 to 30 m-high sand dunes slowed down our progress to less than 1 km/hr.

We eventually stopped stunned in front of a 100 m high sand wall. The situation was dire for our petrol reserve was running low. The reconnoitring flight taken by Willi was our last chance. Should he return to report any sign of civilisation, we would travel on foot with minimal equipment. However, Willi only brought back more wonderful pictures of the desert. We had to admit defeat and returned to the present Qiemo City.

### Conclusion

Although we reached about 400 km inside the desert, searched 280 km on foot in various teams, as well as surveyed an area of more than 2500 km<sup>2</sup> from the air, we didn't find any signs of a human settlement. While the Neolithic finds are very important, we are disappointed to have missed the ancient Qiemo. Has the town been totally destroyed and vanished? Are the ruins still slumbering under the huge sand dunes? Hopefully, further research will give a satisfied answer. 

1. The desert at night. Since the camera's shutter had been kept open for the night, the rotation of the earth created this image.
2. The satellite picture of the search area, north of the present Qiemo City and River Qarqan He





**Feature Story:****Nirvana in Western Sichuan —  
Nine Dragons**

A district in Hong Kong is named Nine Dragons (Kowloon); coincidentally, there is also a region in Sichuan bears the same name (only with different pronunciation, Jiulong). Both "Nine Dragons", however, are of enormous contrast.

The Nine Dragons in Hong Kong is highly modernised. The hustle and bustle of the city life can easily suffocate you. On the contrary, the Nine Dragons in the western Sichuan is an area with a well-preserved ecology.

Apart from the indigenous forest in Wahuishan Mountain, there are the verdant prairie (Riluku) and the dashing Yalong River. Moreover, the Wuxuhai Lake there is comparable to the awe-inspiring plateau lakes in Jiuzhaigou.

In comparison to the overly commercialised tourist areas, the Nine Dragons is like a nirvana of the western Sichuan.

**Discoveries:****The Desolate Reindeer Town**

In 1998, I travelled to the Aoluguya Township of Inner Mongolia, which is inhabited by some 160 Ewenki people. This is the settlement of a branch of the Ewenki ethnic group called Yakute. The Yakute people live mostly on hunting and raising reindeers. Their ancestors originally lived in a place northeast of Lake Baikal in Russia and in a mountain forest by the Silka River on the upper reaches of the Heilongjiang River.

**City Snap:  
Changsha's Transformation**

Changsha is an ancient capital with the revolutionary tradition. The city railway station here still broadcasts propaganda music such as "The East is Red" on schedule, and the brilliant images of the revolutionary leader could be seen everywhere. Nonetheless, the city has changed into a resplendent city with rich nightlife after the opening-up policy.





# BITS AND PIECES ABOUT YUNNAN



Yunnan Province is located in the southwest of China, bordering Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam on its west and southwest. The province covers an area of 394,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and has a population of 40,000,000. Unfortunately, people here were often involved in wars due to its strategic location.

Yunnan boasts a sound natural environment with magnificent mountains, lush virgin forests (totaling nearly 10 million ha), and precipitous valleys. More than half of

China's 30,000 kinds of high-grade plants can be found in Yunnan, which is also home to 3,000-plus kinds of rare animals, over 30 kinds of birds as well as more than 130 kinds of reptiles. On top of these, there are also some wonderful geological attractions, ranging from stone forests to limestone caves, which bear a trademark for this unique province.

Yunnan province has the largest number of minority groups in the country. The 26 ethnic minority groups give a rich patina of diversity and colour to the Yunnan scene, contributing with their vibrant ethnic costumes, traditional songs and dances, as well as the lively life of the festivals.

From Tengchong, one can easily get to the two famous tourists' havens: cities of Dali and Xishuangbanna.



## MAIN ATTRACTIONS

### Dali

Widely acknowledged as the "Backpackers Paradise" in China, Dali Ancient City draws visitors from all over the world; many live here for months or even years. In the Yangren Street (foreigners street) in the heart of the city, where several dozens of cafes, western style restaurants, and clothes shops are always full of international visitors.

In historical terms, Dali is the political, economic, and cultural centre of Yunnan Province. During the Nanzhao Kingdom period, the Bai people of the region banded together to defeat the army of the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907) and establish complete control over Yunnan. That period lasted five hundred years and it marks one of Dali's highest periods of prominence.

As a result, Dali is the cradle of traditional culture in Yunnan, best represented by the Three Pagodas of Chongsheng Temple, the ruins of Tianhe City (once the capital of the Nanzhao Kingdom), the Dehua Stele, the ruins of Yangjuhu City (once the capital of the Dali and Nanzhao Kingdom) and the Gantong Temple.



After following the historical track of Dali, don't forget to visit its natural wonders. Dali has scenic spots such as the Cangshan Mountains, Erhai Lake, Butterfly Spring, Jizu Mountain, Shibao Mountain and Weibao Mountain. The crescent-shaped Erhai Lake covers an area of 250 km<sup>2</sup> and is located about two kilometres east of Dali. On a sunny day, the crystal waters of Erhai Lake and the snow mantled Cangshan Mount radiate with each other. Thus the scene was commonly described as "Silver Cangshan and Jade Erhai".



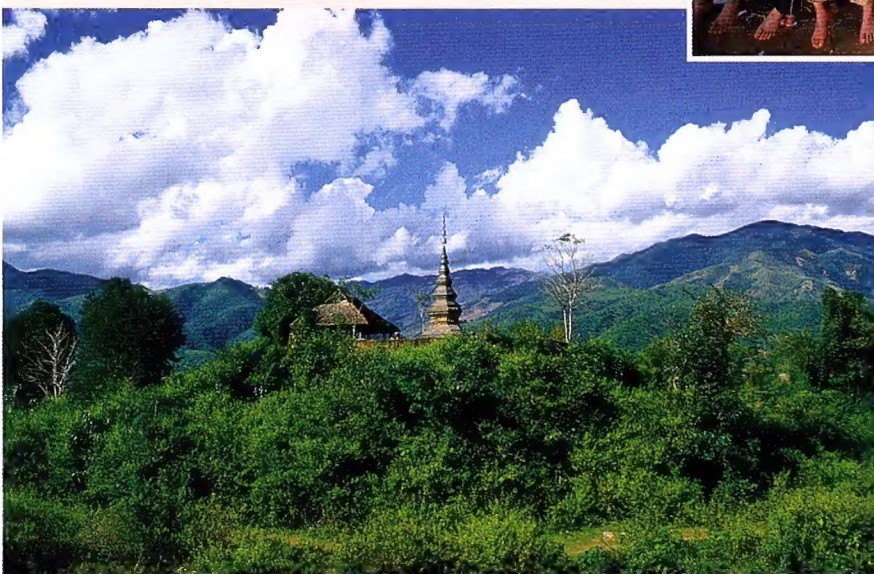
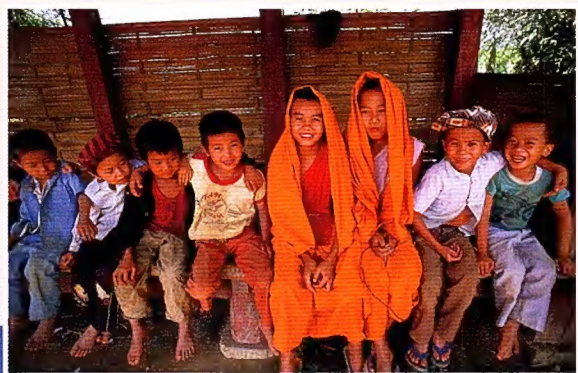
### Xishuangbanna

Xishuangbanna is the southernmost prefecture of Yunnan Province with the city of Jinghong and the counties of Menghai and Mengla under its jurisdiction. Of Xishuangbanna's 20,000-km<sup>2</sup> terrain, tourist and scenic resorts roughly take up five percent of the area, and nature reserves occupy about 10%.

Renowned as a huge natural zoo, Xishuangbanna's rain forest and monsoon jungles provide a habitat for almost a thousand species of terrestrial vertebrates, birds, amphibious animals and reptiles. Among animals for world protection are elephants, white-breasted black woodpeckers, leopards and Bengalese tigers. In addition, the region has 5,000 kinds of plants or about one-sixth of the total in China. There are species of trees that go back a million years, and they are still propagating themselves today.

Since the Qing Dynasty (1616 - 1911), adventurers have journeyed here seeking rich biological treasures, and the region's fame as a natural paradise was as well known as that of the Amazon. In the long term however, this reputation has cost a steep price. Many rare species of plant and animal have been plundered, destroyed or made extinct, as many visitors seek to take away a little piece of Xishuangbanna.

Dai people have lived on this strangely habitable land for generations, and their typical houses can be seen all



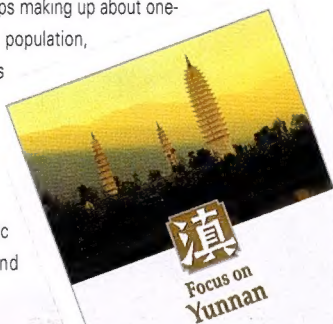
over the region. These Dai bamboo structures raised on stilts keep away floods and dangerous animals. Hunting is still the main income, in conjunction with farming. In terms of culture, the Dai people dress in spectacular colours and furs, and dancing and singing are the popular leisure activities. Last but not least, the Water Splashing Festival of the Dai people is one of the most fascinating celebrations that has kept travellers enchanted.



Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Yunnan

The mountainous wonderland of Yunnan enjoys a favourable warm climate year round. Its capital, Kunming, sitting alongside Yunnan's largest lake, Dianchi, has the honourable name of "Spring City". The province is full of natural wonders and cultural relics, such as the Stone Forests, the Shangri-La, and the ancient cities of Dali and Lijiang. With over 20 diverse ethnic groups making up about one-third of the population, opportunities abound for you to see their characteristic cultures and customs.



Paperback HK\$65 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Fujian

Situated on the southeast coast, Fujian Province overlooks Taiwan Island across the Taiwan Strait. Its mountainous landscape includes the Wuyi Mountain Scenic Area, one of the UN World Heritage sites in China. The province's zigzag coastlines, numerous beaches and charming seas offer spectacular scenic beauty as well as historical and cultural interest in such places as the Drumming Wave Islet in Xiamen and the Mazu Temple in Meizhou Island.



Paperback HK\$65 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Shanghai

Shanghai, the largest metropolis in China, and formerly the Far East financial centre, has experienced dramatic development over the past century. The world-famous Bund along the Huangpu River shows you buildings of different historical periods and varied architectural styles, while skyscrapers are rising in the new area of Pudong. Shanghai's multiculturalism is seen in its music — operas, nostalgic jazz and discos — and in the busy commercial district of Nanjing and Huaihai roads.



# Photographic Series To Guide Your China Tours

Each book, focusing on a province or city, presents unique scenery and customs, and provides you with useful tourist information.

Paperback HK\$65 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Shaanxi

Shaanxi is the cradle of the Chinese civilisation and Xi'an was the capital of 13 dynasties. This has left Shaanxi a rich legacy of historical sites and cultural relics. In the provincial capital Xi'an, there is the fascinating terracotta army unearthed from the tomb of the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang; the tomb of Tang-dynasty Wu Zetian, China's first empress; and the stele forest. The province's beauty is capped with the sheer cliffs of Mount Huashan and the yellow earth of the Loess Plateau.



Paperback HK\$65 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Guangdong

An important gateway into China, the fertile Pearl River Delta of the southern province of Guangdong fans out from Guangzhou to the South China Sea and borders Hong Kong and Macao. The province's natural scenic spots include the limestone pinnacles of Zhaoqing's Seven Star Crag, the red sandstone of Danxia Mountain, and the volcanic beauty of Xiqiao Mountain. The capital, Guangzhou, offers plenty of history in its museums, temples, mosques and old colonial buildings.



Paperback HK\$65 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

### Focus on Guizhou

Guizhou is a land of splendid natural scenery. Its towering mountains and karst landforms team up with the gurgling rivers and magnificent waterfalls to form a wonderful work of Mother Nature. Huangguoshu Waterfalls and the limestone caves are the province's most frequented scenic spots. The 17 ethnic groups living in the picturesque province further colour the land with vivid customs and joyous festivals. It is its natural beauty and culture that make Guizhou a perfect travel destination.



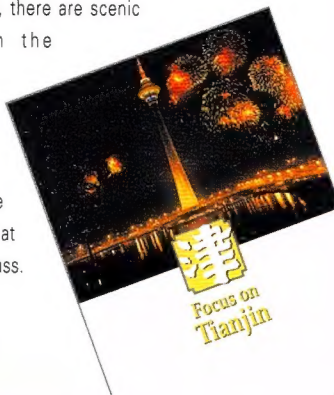


Paperback HK\$55 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

## Focus on Tianjin

Tianjin, one of the four municipalities under direct Central Government administration, is an important industrial and commercial centre of China and the biggest port in the north. The history of the city can be found in its Ancient Culture Street, 100-year-old Western-style buildings, Opera Museum and Mazu Temple. Besides the TV Tower and the Haihe River in the city, there are scenic spots in the

outskirts, including the Dule Temple and the Great Wall at Huangya Pass.



Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

## Focus on Xinjiang

On the vast land of Xinjiang in Northwest China, there are mountains, basins, deserts and lakes, which provide tourists with numerous attractions — ruins of ancient cities and tombs along the Silk Road; Turpan, an oasis in the desert; Kanas Lake, a gem imbedded in the Altay Mountains; Bayanbulak — the Swan Lake; and the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan.

The minority ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, such as the

Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Tajik, Xibe, Kirgiz and Tatar, all have their own unique colourful culture.



Paperback HK\$55 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

## Focus on Beijing

Beijing is a metropolis of everlasting charm. There are simply too many captivating things to see, to experience and to taste in this grand city with both old glamour and new mobility. There are historical sites such as the Palace Museum (the Forbidden City), the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace, and the Ming Tombs; there are also many scenic spots in its outskirts. Recently, tours have been organised for visitors to taste the real Beijing flavour of life — touring the small back lanes, having tea in a traditional-style teahouse and enjoying the Peking Opera.



Paperback HK\$55 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

## Focus on Shanxi

Shanxi Province, one of the birthplaces of the Chinese civilisation, has impressive ancient architecture and a wealth of well-preserved Buddhist temples, monasteries and grottoes. Among the most famous are the Yungang Grottoes containing some of China's oldest sculptures and Buddhist art, the Yongle Palace, the Jinci Temple, the Hanging Monastery built on a sheer cliff and the Wutai Mountain, one of China's most famous sacred Buddhist lands.



Paperback HK\$55 HK\$76  
Hard cover HK\$150 HK\$120

## Focus on Guangxi

Unusual topography has endowed the province with numerous spectacular karst formations — limestone caves, pinnacles and rocks. The most famous and enchanting scenic spot is Guilin, and the most travelled route, on the Lijiang River from Guilin to Yangshuo. The coastal city of Beihai has the country's largest beach, the Silver Beach. Other attractions include the varied traditional customs of ethnic minorities, the Sino-Vietnamese border area, and the mysterious Huashan cliff paintings.



Now a 20% discount is offered to our readers for all these books.

### Local rates (surface postage included):

Paperback - HK \$84

Hardcover - HK \$130

### Overseas rates (surface postage included):

Paperback - HK \$96 / US \$12

Hardcover - HK \$160 / US \$20

Title	Paperback Qty	Hardcover Qty
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Yunnan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Fujian		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Shanghai		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Tianjin		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Xinjiang		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Shaanxi		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Guangdong		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Guizhou		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Shanxi		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Guangxi		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Beijing		
<b>Total:</b>		

Paperback: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Hardcover: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* For registered mail, add HK \$13 / US \$1.7

\* For US cheque or US bank draft, add HK \$56 / US \$7

Total = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

**To pay by check, please make check payable to:  
Hong Kong China Tourism Press.**

Credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER ☐ AE

Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form to:  
Hong Kong China Tourism Press  
24/F Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road,  
Quarry Bay, Hong Kong; or fax to (852) 2561 8196.  
For more information, please call (852) 2561 8001  
for the Subscription Department.





# JIN JIANG HOTEL

*where Shanghai's past and future are ever present.*



At the heart of Shanghai, sits the stately Jin Jiang Hotel. Here, venerable European buildings surround a lush, wooded garden, and house some of the most modern facilities available in Shanghai. The hotel is proud to have received about 300 state leaders and government heads since its opening. Its incomparably attentive service has won high praise from guests from both home and abroad. The Cathay Building of Jin Jiang Hotel which was built in 1926, integrates the traditional classic Gothic style. In 1999, the Cathay Building was renovated into a five-star hotel. It takes on once again an elegant look and combines the traditional classic style with up-to-date facilities.

Jin Jiang Grand Hall witnessed numerous historic events including the birth of the "Sino-American Joint Communiqué" in February 1972. After rebuilding, the new Jin Jiang Grand Hall is ready to provide simply the best service and hospitality with the state-of-the-art facilities.

Jin Jiang's food has a history dating back to the 1930's and its Sichuan and Cantonese cuisine has become perfected after more than a half-century of experience.

70 years later, Jin Jiang Hotel — where Shanghai's past and future are ever present.



锦江饭店

**JIN JIANG HOTEL**  
SHANGHAI



Add: 59 Mao Ming Road (S) Shanghai China

Tel: (86) 21-62582582 62534242

Fax: (86) 21-64725588

Post Code: 200020

Website: <http://www.jinjianghotelshanghai.com>

E-mail: [jnjiang@public2.sta.net.cn](mailto:jnjiang@public2.sta.net.cn)

